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Kris Aquino cries libel

Rosales ties for 9th in Canadian Open

SLEX toll rates lowered

Rollback in oil prices unlikely

Sino ang bagay sa DSWD si Dinky o si Noli?

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER
BALANCED NEWS, FEARLESS VIEWS
Thursday, July 15, 2004 • 28 pages / vol. 19 / no. 216

US quiz champion closes in on $1M

LOS ANGELES — If the losers in this meetings and his current $600,000 to be in "singularly" unscrupulous, the question stood up to the test!

A curious mind, a good memory and an artistic

3 broadcasters file P2.5-M countersuit vs ABS-CBN

By Tina Santos
Editor

CEBU: "Bad" over a P25 million legal suit filed against them by the giant ABS-CBN media network, three broadcasters countered the decided to hit back.

Erlando Langco, Anne Frances Torres and

www.inquirer.com.ph/cebu
www.inquirer.net

Erap put under 'rest house' arrest, cleared of use of Jose Velarde alias

By Armand N. Nocum

If PArO a double victory for President Joseph Estrada at the Sandiganbayan. But only did the sandigan court preserve the dismiss one of three criminal cases against him, it also allowed his detention at his rest house in Tanay, Rizal.

Justice Mendez, the Sandiganbayan ruled that Estrada could not be prosecuted for using the "Jose Velarde" alias to open a bank account in 2000, saying the

GARDED WISE Senate resident Estrada's rest house in Tanay, Rizal.

Iraqi Muslim clerics offer help to free Filipino driver

By Alexis Pupa and Blanche S. Rivera

EIGHT Muslim clerics in Iraq have offered to help secure the release of Angelito de la Cruz, in prisoner reported on President Macapagal-Arroyo to do all she can to save the life of a Filipino truck driver.

Al Camp Aguinaldo, an Armed Forces spokesperson said the military was prepared to pull out the 51 member Philippine humanitarian force in Iraq—if given the orders to do so by the country's political leaders.

The withdrawal of the 40 soldiers and eight policemen comprising the force has been demanded by the Iraq militants holding De la Cruz as a condition for his release.

National Security Adviser Norberto Gonzales said the Filipino truck drivers (the 31 Muslim religious leaders in Iraq had volunteered to help secure the release of De la Cruz, pedner said yesterday.

Gonzales revealed the information in Rector Archbishop Fernando Capalla, president of the Catholic Bishops' Conference of the Philippines, who received a briefing on Sunday night on the government's efforts to secure the hostage crisis.

Gonzales said the Iraqi cleric's move was in response to the appeal made by Abdul Muthlan, vice governor of the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao and president of the Ulama League of the Philippines.

The government brought Muthlan to Baguio on say the weekend to meet De

Palace silent; Sto. Tomas admits fault

By Juliet Labog-Javellana, Jerome Aning and Marvin P. Mirell

SO WHAT were they all about?

Malacañang was quiet yesterday about the resolution that surrounded Angelito de la Cruz's "release" two nights ago by his kidnappers.

Neither President Macapagal-Arroyo's spokesperson, Ignacio Bunye, nor his deputy, Ricardo Saludo, showed up for the routine media briefing. Press Secretary Milton Alingasa was in his office but had nothing to say.

For the first time since the crisis broke on Monday, the Cabinet Oversight Committee on Internal Security did not call a meeting. Alingasa could not explain why.

Reporters were told that all statements pertaining to the terrorist hostage situation would henceforth originate from the Department of Foreign Affairs.

But Foreign Secretary Delia Albert had no follow-up statement to her statement on Sunday that "all the real and informed" channels were being exhausted to free the two-year-old truck driver and father of two from the hands of his captors.

Labor Secretary Patricia Sto. Tomas

Pinoy hostage gets 48-hour reprieve

10 other Filipino drivers reported stranded in Iraq

By Jerome Aning and Marvin P. Mirell

BAGHDAD insurgents yesterday gave a glimmer of hope for the release of Filipino truck driver Angelito de la Cruz, but also kept the nerves and his family dangling in agony.

Hours after their second ultimatum ran expired, the shadowy group of militants set a nine-48-hour deadline for President Macapagal-Arroyo to agree to pull out the 51st humanitarian force of 51 Filipino troops from Iraq, or De la Cruz would be beheaded.

Qatada's Muslim television network, in its evening newscast, aired a video showing in one sequence a masked man holding a gleaming sword and, in another shot, De la Cruz wearing an orange suit—the attire supposedly worn by executed Iraq prisoners before their executions.

"Bones are good signals that the extension of the deadline has been given. But another 48 hours? Labor Secretary Patricia Sto. Tomas said yesterday in Dubai, where she was accompanying De la Cruz's wife and brother-in-law to London.

In a video purportedly from the militants released together on the Arab television station Al-Arabiya, a masked man holding up a sword said De la Cruz would no longer be a hostage if the Philippines complied with the group's demands but instead would be held as a prisoner pending the end of the war.

After Filipino troops leave by July 20—the ultimatum set by the group—he would be released, the masked man said.

It was not immediately clear how Filipino officials had learned of the extension.

While De la Cruz hails the threat of execution by his Iraqi kidnappers, Filipinos in Saudi Arabia were concerned about the fate of another 10 compatriots stranded in Iraq, a community leader said in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia.

ANXIETIES de la Cruz (right) and Jessie de la Cruz (behind), wife and brother-in-law, respectively, of Filipino hostage Angelo de la Cruz, and Labor Secretary Patricia Sto. Tomas (left) arrive in Amman, Jordan, yesterday en route to Dubai to meet Angelo de la Cruz's abductors.

DEMIGERS at Mendiola Bridge in Manila to press the government to pull out Filipino troops from Iraq as demanded by De la Cruz's abductors.

Palace silent; Sto. Tomas admits fault

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Labor Secretary Patricia Sto. Tomas

Drilon, Villar to share term of Senate President

By TJ Burgonio

THE FIRST two years for Sen. Franklin Drilon, and the third year for Sen. Manuel Villar.

Drilon announced yesterday that he and Villar would share the Senate presidency in this manner to avert acrimonious infighting and ensure smooth legislative work in view of the looming local elections.

"We believe that our personal interests should be subordinated to the greater national interest. Our egos are nothing compared to what we face as a crisis if we don't get our act together," Drilon said in a press briefing.

"We didn't want to add more to the country's problems. There's the problem in Iraq, there's the looming flood crisis, and there's a lot of bickering ... It's a good deal if we think of the national interest in the face of these problems," Villar said.

Under the deal, Drilon will serve as Senate President during the first two years, or the first two regular sessions of the 13th Congress, and Villar, the third year or third regular session, which begins on July 2006.

President Macapagal-Arroyo is supporting the four-sharing deal as this would ensure unity and harmony in the administration majority and enable the smooth passage of her priority measures, said a Palace official, who requested not

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

TUESDAY, JULY 13, 2004

Second FRONTPAGE

WEATHER FORECAST

Bishops: Polls were credible

By Blancie S. Rivera

PRESIDENT Macapagal-Arroyo has just strengthened her mandate after the influential local Catholic Church leadership upheld its earlier pronouncement that the May 10 elections were generally peaceful and had reflected the will of the people. It also dismissed accusations that Ms. Arroyo had cheated her way to Malacañang.

Davao Archbishop Fernando Capalla said the statements of the bishops present at the 106th plenary assembly of the Catholic Bishops Conference of the Philippines held in Manila over the weekend was that the election was generally credible.

Capalla said this affirmed the CBCP's June 1 declaration that "some instances of cheating and violations of the election law by political parties in their areas... did not affect the voting in general."

Capalla, president of the CBCP, said that each bishop present was ordained a shepherd for and volunteers in their respective dioceses had observed instances of manipulated but that could have "substantially" altered the results of the elections.

"With only one or two exceptions, the bishops answered in the negative ... It is the sense of the bishops that the results of the elections reflected the will of the Filipino people," the CBCP said in a statement read by Capalla at a press conference yesterday.

The CBCP, however, still awaited actual four nominees to assess the reports submitted by various political groups and parties which claimed to have monitored instances of election fraud.

The committee, to be manned by the CBCP officers, would study the reports "for any material relevance" and map out plans on how the dioceses could better monitor future elections in the country.

"Any changes by political parties or violations of irregularities during the elections, the bishops believe, go beyond our competence to judge and should be remanded to the proper courts or electoral tribunals for legal action," the CBCP said.

It added: "Now is the time to look beyond the elections. Our people must move ahead with fresh enthusiasm."

Cebu Archbishop Ricardo Cardinal Vidal had presented before the CBCP assembly the voluminous reports on alleged electoral fraud submitted to him by the diocesan political groups and parties after the May 10 polls.

Vidal had said that he felt he should honor his promise to the political groups in being the matter before the bishops even if the CBCP had already concluded that the elections was peaceful and credible.

Capalla said the bishops were still concerned about the rampant buying and selling of votes, violence, disenfranchisement of voters and other irregularities that were reported during the elections.

He said the CBCP "condemned" cheating in any form, which may allay the ad hoc committee was formed.

President Arroyo won by slightly more than one million votes over her closest rival Senator Fernando Poe Jr. Poe's supporters insisted that the President's party had cheated in the municipal and provincial levels and manipulated the canvassing of votes by Congress.

Poe has refused to concede and his supporters are swearing by demand on whether or not he would file an election protest.

Taiwan head sends emissary to GMA

By Jerome Aning

A REPRESENTATIVE of Taiwanese President Chen Shui-bian quietly paid a visit to the Philippines on Friday to relay Chen's congratulations to President Macapagal-Arroyo on her election to a new term.

Secretary to the Mainland Affairs Council Joseph Wu and Taiwan Office as well as Taiwanese newspapers mentioned by the Inquirer said Su Tseng-chang, secretary general of the Taiwan presidential office, hastily met with Ms. Arroyo and several senior Philippine government officials.

He did not name any public statements about his trip in Taiwan or in the Philippines but the Taipei Times quoted him as saying, "Taiwan's efforts to make friends with other countries mean, the senior pressure (from China) and there are so many people, even inside our country, who go all out to ruin the possibility of the government expanding Taiwan's space in the international community."

"I did my best to achieve my mission but I have no right to reveal anything," he added.

He was accompanied in his visit by officials of the Taiwan Mainland Security Council and Council of Labor Affairs chairs Chen Chu.

Both President Chen and Ms. Arroyo won narrow victories in the presidential elections held respectively in their respective countries.

JI expanding in RP, says AFP

By Alcuin Papa

THE ISLAMIC terrorist group Jemaah Islamiyah is expanding in Central Mindanao and Basilan, a military spokesperson said yesterday.

Not only that, Armed Forces of the Philippines Public Information Office chief Lt. Col. Daniel Lucero told reporters, is increasing the number of JI members in the country has increased.

But Lucero was quick to add that the military was on top of the situation, saying it had identified some of the JI members.

"We have identified a number of JI members operating in Central Mindanao and Basilan. I can't give you the exact figures but there was an increase in their numbers," Lucero said.

He said military intelligence had culled this information from bomb-making materials confiscated from suspected Abu Sayyaf Group members arrested in Manila over the past few months.

Lucero said there were still more JI operatives in Central Mindanao than in the other two areas, but are not yet technically capable of delivering such armaments because they need a sophisticated system to deliver the same," he said.

At the same time, Lucero confirmed that the JI and the AMG had entered into a "marriage of convenience" with the Abu Sayyaf and the JI has been there. They also hoped to get top training in exchange for sanctuary that they are providing the JI," Lucero said.

Defense Secretary Eduardo Ermita had said some 40 JI members were holed up on Mt. Kitanlad in Lanao del Sur since arriving there in the late '90s.

Meanwhile, Presidential Adviser on the Peace Process Teresita Quintos-Deles said the peace talks between the government and the Moro Islamic Liberation Front was on track and the MILF had been cooperating in enforcing a cease-fire agreement between the two sides.

Deles made the statement in reaction to remarks aired last week by US Ambassador Francis Kimtan'dwe calling for a tougher campaign against the Jemaah Islamiyah.

The ambassador had also purportedly thanked the MILF for its supposed lack of enthusiasm in watching the peace in Mindanao and used this charge to rationalize Washington's refusal to delist the MILF as a final offense in anti-terror regime.

TWO JUNIOR AIDES AND AN INQUISITOR. President Arroyo yesterday conferred the Legion of Honor on former Armed Forces of the Philippines vice chief of staff Gen. Rodolfo Garcia (left) and the Order of Sikatuna, Rank of Datu, on Ambassador to Washington Albert del Rosario (second from left). She also inducted into office new Interior and Local Government Secretary Angelo Reyes. (See story on Page A3)

Imelda backs down, will let film be shown

By Philip C. Tubeza

FOR freedom's sake

Former First Lady Imelda Marcos surrenders with the two cops-cum-actors to the public screening of an award-winning documentary on her life, claiming that she was left no "other option" but to do so.

In a press statement, Marcos said she had withdrawn the case she filed before the Makati Regional Trial Court since the word "documentary" would be "safe, immune from the whim of the Supreme Court" since the word "documentary" would be "safe, immune from the whim of the Supreme Court" since the word "documentary" would be "safe, immune from the whim of the Supreme Court"

UNSOLICITED ADVICE

FVR tells Gloria: Stop playing musical chairs

By Fe Zamora

His advice was not sought but in case anybody would like to know, former President Fidel V. Ramos wants the present administration to "stop playing musical chairs."

Ramos, who was president from 1992 to 1998, said President Macapagal-Arroyo should look to the private sector as well for potential appointees to Cabinet positions.

"Stop playing the musical chair and gather from a wider field of talents in the Philippines. With 81 million people, I don't see any reason why she cannot draw from some of those who have been successful (in other fields)," Ramos said in a press conference.

In situations wherein Ms Arroyo really has to move one official to another, as in the case of Angelo Reyes who was shuffled from head of an anti-kidnapping body to secretary of interior and local government, Ramos said: "You can still be productive as long as those guy falls under the category of tough, durable, effective action manager and who will ride out with the president through thick and thin."

He said six months ago, Ms Arroyo would have difficulty enlisting "good talents" because her political fate was still uncertain.

But the situation is different now, he said.

"The Titanic is sailing again. It is now trustworthy and it has six years minus 11 days to prove much in dimension. This is a good time for her to extract some bright young men from the private sector," Ramos said.

Ramos, however, held his comment on Ms

RAMOS: This is a good time for the President to extract some bright young men from the private sector.

Arroyo's early appointees in the Cabinet. "The persons in not yet complete . . . and my advice has not been asked," he said.

"Now is the time for the President to really recruit durable, capable, tough psychologically, physically and professionally . . . department heads and government managers because she has a better offer to give them," he added.

He said "new talents, new leaders of government" are also taking over the reins in countries abroad.

Reyes vows to implement reforms

By Gil Cabacungan and Christian Esguerra

INTERIOR and Local Government Secretary Angelo Reyes yesterday pledged to institute "far-reaching" reforms in his department in order to successfully implement the peace and order component of President Macapagal-Arroyo's 10-point agenda.

Reyes, inducted into office yesterday by President Arroyo at the Rizal Hall in Malacañang, told reporters he would also endeavor to help restore some of national treasury's under the rule of law.

Later in his 20-minute speech during turnover rites at Camp Crame, amplified this theme by outlining a seven-point programs which calls for the forging of a "symbiotic" relationship among local governments, law enforcement units and communities, proper coordination of the departments by ensuring not corruption, and cracking down on kidnappers and other criminal gangs.

The President had also agreed to make Reyes as chief of the National Anti-Kidnapping Task Force, which has scored dramatic achievements in neutralizing kidnap-for-ransom groups.

Reyes' speech did not touch on jueteng, a subject whose he suffered some embarrassments after publicly proposing that the illegal numbers game be legalized. Church groups had denounced the proposal as immoral.

But his predecessor, Jose Lina, called attention to his speech that a result anent law against Jueteng had just been passed in Congress.

This was a key element lacking in his campaign that caught an annual revenge of 22,000 law enforcers and financiers of illegal gambling operations in the last three years, Lina claimed.

Ebdane hints he might leave PNP post earlier

By Christian V. Esguerra

PNP Director General Hermogenes Ebdane Jr. yesterday dropped hints of leaving the police top post earlier than his mandatory retirement by year end.

"I'm supposed to retire on Dec. 20 but I can go anytime," he told reporters after the turnover ceremonies at the Department of Interior and Local Government at Camp Crame. "I also believe that we must give a chance to other officers."

Ebdane, whose two-year stay as the is already being feared on PNP standards, made the opening until rumors that some of his subordinates had been itching to take over his post.

"I also believe that when the time comes for an officer to retire then he must retire, no exception," Ebdane said.

But the top cop aren't probably be idle for long if his decision to leave the service pushes.

Ebdane confirmed receiving "many offers" for a top government post.

"I'm proud to accept that the offers are good because it's difficult when you're already retiring and there's still no job available," he said.

NEWSBRIEFS

SC voids cement duty

THE SUPREME Court has voided the P30.8 duty on imported gray Portland cement despite the claims of local cement producers that the importation was hurting the industry.

In a 62-page ruling, the SC en Dilled the decision on June 25, 2003 of then Trade and Industry Secretary Mar Roxas to impose a harsh 30 sanction because the Tariff Commission had already determined that the imported gray Portland cement did not pose a threat to the local cement producers.

The SC also voided a decision by the Court of Appeals that said Roxas was not bound by the Tariff Commission's findings. It said the Court of Tax Appeals, not the CA, had jurisdiction on matters connected with the imposition of safeguard measures or tariff sanctions.

Philip C. Tolero

Young Drilon hits rumors

AGRICULTURE undersecretary Jesse Drilon, son of Senate President Franklin Drilon, has denied rumors that he will be appointed to a higher position in the Department of Agriculture (DA).

"It's baseless," Drilon said of the rumors that the President was planning to appoint him to a higher position as a reward for his older brother Senate President Franklin Drilon, for assisting Ms Arroyo's victory in senatorial bid in the May elections.

But the younger Drilon denied he was now in contention for the top post in the agriculture department, vacated by erstwhile Secretary Luis Lorenzo who has since been appointed by former National Food Authority administrator Arthur Yap.

$100 for US student visas

BEGINNING Aug. students, exchange visitors and scholars attending US schools or conducting research in the United States will be required to pay a $100 fee when applying for visas the US Embassy announced yesterday. The charge is to be offset to the fee students must pay to obtain a US visa.

The announcement, citing a June 30 press release from the US Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE), said the fee will take effect on Sept. 1. It said the increase will help cover the costs of administering and maintaining Student Exchange and Visitor Information System (SevIS), an Internet-based system that maintains information on foreign students and exchange visitors in the United States and helps to facilitate their entry.

"The fee applies to F, J and M nonimmigrant classification; however, participants in certain J-1 exchange visitors program will pay a reduced fee of $35 or no fee, at all," said the ICE press release.

UP Eco invites HS studies

THE UP School of Economics Student Council and UP Economics Society will hold on Aug. 6 a one-day congress for Metro Manila high school students and their economics teachers on July 24, 2004.

Dubbed "Reformulation of the Philippine Economy in the Future Free Trade Agreement," the festivities is to make high school students think critically on open trade and globalization issues. Speakers will be experts from the government sector and international trade studies and from the Philippine Society of Economic Evaluation Economists. The forum will be held at the Dondato Macapagal Hall of UP School of Economics, Diliman, Quezon City from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m.

Interested schools may send two to ten of its senior high school students and a faculty adviser (preferably an Economics teacher). For details, call Patti Camua at (089) 9819555, or Lot Pantaleon at (089) 9819575.

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Pinoy hostage gets 48-hour reprieve

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nation at the strength and bold- under of the family of Ms. De la Cruz. Their courage and faith help to mobilize us in our concerted efforts to resolve their safe release.

The government, she said, asked "for the understanding of the nation and the media on the need for us to proceed with the task of bring[ing] home from media spotlight."

At the beginning of the hostage, DFA spokesperson Alberto Romulo said no question would be silenced after Albert made her statement.

"We shall endeavor, as best as we can and as circumstances permit, to keep the public informed of crucial developments," Albert said.

2 a.m., Wednesday

Senior DFA officials told reporters the new deadline should begin at the expiration of the previous one, which was 2 a.m. yesterday, Romulo said. The rebels have had announced they were giving the government another 48 hours to comply with their demands.

The new deadline should be 2 a.m., Wednesday, the officials said.

The militants from the group calling itself The Iraqi Islamic Army-Khaled Ibn Al-Waleed Corps had demanded that Manila agree to a July 20 pullout or they would kill De la Cruz.

The July 20 pullout would be 1 month earlier than the scheduled departure of the Filipino troops.

The government has said it is sticking to the scheduled Aug. 20 date because of "our commitment to the Philippine people."

Philippine negotiators were working through undisclosed ways to try to free De la Cruz, a diplomat in Baghdad.

The deadline for two other hostages—Bulgarian Iordan Iordanov and Iraqi driver Jamil Ibrahim—passed without incident.

In Bontoc, Mountain Province, Mrs. Angelina De la Cruz's family heard about the two-hour delay after the kidnappers announced their deadline.

Arsenio's appeal

Officials said Ibn De la Cruz's wife, Arsenio, appealed for support on public television to the hostage-takers.

The gloomy mood in the De la Cruz household was lifted slightly by an error of the television scheduler Thursday that would see him again on a July 20 pullout on their hands.

Before the kidnapping, the Philippines had been discussing whether to extend the peacekeeping mandate.

"I can tell you, the media—the hostage is alive as of now," a senior Philippine diplomat told Agence France-Presse. "The deadline has been extended by two days."

De la Cruz's posthumous birthday is a close relative for the next Christmas, the officials said.

The Iraqi militants oppose the 35-unit Philippine force.

Mr. Arsenio, a staunch ally of the United States, is facing heavy pressure to agree to the Iraqi kidnappers' demand that the Philippines withdraw its troops.

Philippine officials said the government would not consider the pullout "for any reason."

"Let us not stop, let us not lose hope," said Arsenio in an interview on ABC network.

Christian-Muslim unity

The De la Cruz plight has spurred Muslim and prayers by his brethren among Christians and Muslims around the country.

In one Manila street, Muslims, Christians and members of the Iglesia ni Cristo joined in a prayer vigil for the hostage.

"I want to appeal to the rebels," said The Associated Press, spokesperson of the Iglesia ni Cristo, "that we are all children of the same God. Let's work for the humanity of the people."

The government assessment more than Filipino troops would leave on Aug. 20 appeared to be deliberately ambiguous, reflecting the fine line that Manila was taking to bring Ibn De la Cruz's release while remaining one of Washington's closest supporters.

It left open the prospect that Philippine troops might remain, under UN auspices, although a pullout before the deadline, which they deployment would be the subject of protracted discussions that would not have much effect on the situation.

Romulo said the militants had said the media on Saturday night was his fault.

"I apologize ... I have to do what is necessary ... They said I should not have announced it," she said in a telephone interview with Ang Pilipino from Antipolo, Isabela, where she had accompanied Ibn De la Cruz's wife in prayer.

Sto. Tomas' presidents announcement had thrown Ibn De la Cruz's friends, relatives and town mates in a frenzy. Relatives in Bontoc, Mountain Province, said they first flocked on television programs and radio.

Miss Filipino diplomat, who is privy to the ongoing negotiations, but who asked not to be named, said media coverage had created a coordination error that led to a glitch.

The diplomat pointed to an Iraqi man thought to have connections that could help survey Ibn De la Cruz's release. He said the Iraqi man is a representative of the militants and was a friend of "many Filipino diplomats there" and, most importantly, had given "reliable information" to the past.

This was what happened on Saturday night, according to the diplomat:

Philippine Embassy Charge d'affaires Ricardo Endaya was out seeking people who could connect the hostage-takers when the Iraqi arrived at the embassy, saying he had a message that could help in the negotiations—the 48-hour ceasefire chief of a pro-Saddam Hussein newspaper.

A senior embassy official immediately called up Manila and relayed the Iraqi's offer to a colleague, who had been previously assigned in Baghdad. The colleague contacted a high-ranking Department of Foreign Affairs official with the right connections to get the word to a Malacañang official.

Apparently, these officials managed to reach the Iraqi and his friend.

Endaya was at his area back in the embassy a while later when a Cabinet official called from Manila to tell excited him to meet an "emissary" at the Palestine Hotel in Baghdad. He was told the officers wanted to discuss how the hostage would be handed over to Philippine officials.

"Endaya went straight to the hotel, alone, he said in his car hours," the diplomat recounted, "but the emissary did not appear." At about this time, news of the alleged release had spread to the Philippines.

Finally, the Baghdad called up Manila, and was told that the emissary would not be coming anymore because there were so many media men in the hotel," the diplomat said.

"But, of course, there were many conversations between the foreign media there to bring up the hotel as a base."

Darkest hours one hour Manila had been alerted. When he got back to the embassy, he sent his report to Manila, and received word about the incident. The Iraqi said it was all just "a joke."

Hopeful

Previous day, Sto. Tomas said she and American were "waiting for the release of Ibn husband."

She explained her confidence: "We are always hopeful. That is our resource or we have enough of."

Yesterday, Arroyo said, the Palace was not totally from the Filipino.

Iraqi Muslim clerics ...

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in Cruz's family and deliver a message to his captors. The appeal, issued in Arabic, was made via satellite television.

"Especially in Mindanao, Christians and Muslims have been in dialogue for many years. If you tell my case, you are destroying my efforts in the Philippines and that is not in accordance with the tradition of Islam," Gonzales quoted Sheikh Qaradawi.

Capadia told reporters yesterday that the "the alumni are respected religious leaders in Muslim society ... If Gonzales' information is correct, then the Muslim must have reached the right channel in the hearts of the kidnappers."

The decision to choose of muslim as Muslim scholars assisted in Islam and Islamic law who transport Islam's sentiments, doctrines and laws, and guarantees sanctuary to the hostages and intellectual history of the Islamic community.

Capadia and Muslim are convenor of the Bishop-Ulama Conference of the Philippines. Muslim, schooled in Islamic philosophy in Cairo, Egypt, is a respected Muslim scholar in the Philippines.

Gonzales told Capadia that the Islamic appeal gained a second more [word 11] to say Muslim scholars who said that they were "going to get Angelo De la Cruz from the hands of the captors."

"I don't know how they'll do it, but according to Gonzales, they are very influential and they will do it," Capadia said.

Vidal request

Gloria Arroyo Rodrigo Duterte and Vidal yesterday said Ms. Arroyo had told him she would "consider" the request for the government to pull out Filipino troops from Baghdad earlier than their scheduled Aug. 20 departure.

The Iraqi kidnappers have decided to release their [word 11] by July 20.

"My request was to anticipate the dates of the pullout because of its only one will end in August ... I think there was an agreement. I do not exactly know what time you [word 11] to withdraw," Duterte said in an [word 11] during which he attended the anniversary celebrations of the Philippine National Police Anti-Illegal Drugs Task Force.

He said the decision told him, "They will consider it. She will consider it."

Vidal said he made the request to Ms Arroyo on Saturday but that he did not mention it again when they were together on the PNP office in Camp Crame on Monday.

"I did not mention it today because I really thought my request was considered by her because if the government can complete the pull-Ad of the troops that might solve this thing," he said.

But Cirge Bonotan, the President's spokesman, said, the President the government was not pulling out the troops earlier than Aug. 20.

"We also said he understood the position of the government that it cannot succumb to blackmail," Bonotan. He issued a campaign speech in Davao city.

He said the President "informed" Vidal's request to the Lebanese Government and Arab League and Secretary Isidro Lapeña, which is dealing with the hostage crisis.

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Corrections

IN THE July 11 issue, on square Franco Pecoso story on Page 44 erroneously referred to Manila Archbishop Jaime Sin as Bishop or a cardinal. Sin is not a member of the Roman Catholic Church's College of Cardinals.

• • •

IN THE July 12 issue, on Page A16, the head of a story was "Barak PP found dead in car in Bulacan." The headline writer meant, it should have been "... in Laguna."

• • •

A STORY in the July 4 issue, "High-school valedictorian with 'perfect grade'" said 11 medical graduates of the Ateneo College of Medicine who were not allowed to take their oath in medicine by the Professional Regulation Commission had taken the board exams in February 2003. Dr. Delfin C. Sorlie, who was then president but is now honorary chairman of the University and the 11 took the board exams in February 1993. She also said seven did not take the exam again because they assisted that they did not think and would be used to fight their case. The four others took the exam again and passed, she said.

• • •

IN THE story "The Queen in 1994 D. Louis Exposition" on Page A22 of the May 28 issue, Baguio City-based anthropologist Jane Bell Bell was reported to have said that "women were allowed to participate in village decisions or activities in the area [a tribal minority] composed of elders] because the women [right after the St. Louis Fair] were able to relate with the foreigners or outsiders of the village." Bell was referring to the population of the women and men who participated in the fair but who had no influence on the development of the area. She said decision-making in the area, especially that on inter-village warfare, was not the country of women. Furthermore, the area is traditionally taboo to women, she said.

• • •

Readers may send what concerns his corrections of human errors or writing to Gerry Lirio, ace editor, Philippine Daily Inquirer, 6th Building, Chino Roces Avenue corner Makati-de Leon, Makati City, Fax No. 897-4783/896-6000, e-mail addresses: inq@inquirer.com.ph and dailyinq@philwebinc.com.ph.

Corrections of typographical errors or obscurity may be sent to Raul Pangalangan, readers' ombudsman, the same address and fax numbers as those of the ace editor, e-mail e-mail address: rmm@upd.edu.ph, admin.com.ph.

THE DAILY GOSPEL

Sunday, July 13, 2004
15th Week in Ordinary Time

1st Reading: Is 7:10
Gospel: Mt 11:20-24

Jesus began to reproach the cities in which he had performed most of his miracles, because the people there did not change their ways. Alas for you Chorazin and Bethsaida! If the miracles worked in you had taken place in Tyre and Sidon, the people there would have repented long ago in sackcloth and ashes. But I assure you, for Tyre and Sidon it will be more tolerable on the day of judgment than for you. And you, Capernaum, will you be lifted up to heaven? You will be brought down to the place of the dead! For if the miracles which were performed in you had taken place in Sodom, it would still be there today. But I tell you, it will be more bearable for Sodom on the day of judgment than for you."

Jesus invited great crowds to Chorazin and Bethsaida to heal. In them is no account of them. Even the two cities were to themselves have changed. Chorazin, from Hebrew, means to a place of stone. Bethsaida is nothing but a location. In the time of God would be their return, he declared that such unrepented deeds, speaking to them about a "day" of judgment, a time when people could have been saved, but will not be, and has death... drained, there is a need to repent.

Repentance is a condition of heart. Does it fit the people, those who heard his teachings then? What if Bethsaida and Sodom had been given another chance? Would they have repented? Jesus says here that they would have done so. The heart of Chorazin "If it were there that they were to live as they are now, they would have repented, if it could, than Sodom."

And the heart even of Chorazin? It was there that they were to live as they are now, they would have repented, if it could, than Sodom.

Are they repentant, like Chorazin and Sodom? Or are they not?

Is there a need for us to repent? Is it the repentance of Sodom, great and shocking, or is it the repentance of Chorazin, the people of the world, and those who were to live as they are now, they would have repented, if it could, than Sodom.

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Drilon, Villar to share term of Senate President

Front page 1

to be named. Drilon and Villar are both administration allies.

Not surprising

The agreement did not surprise other senators. Drilon and the late Sen. Renato Cayetano, both of the People Power Coalition, also decided to split the six-year term of the Senate presidency, beginning in 2001.

Cayetano, however, died of liver cancer before he could serve his half of the term.

Drilon and Villar sealed the agreement at around 2 p.m. shortly before they announced it to the press briefing, a senator said. The deal came after months of "friendly talk," Drilon said, as he said Villar could backtrack down to resign as Senate[illegible] when Congress goes on July 20.

"There is an urgent need to address the looming financial crisis that our country faces. Hence, the need for a united effort of the Senate, particularly the majority coalition, which has been given a mandate by the people," the three senators said in a statement.

"After reviewing all our options, we thought it was best that we set aside personal ambitions and work together to vigorously pursue the legislative agenda to address the looming financial crisis that we face," Drilon said.

Retained

Drilon also disclosed that Sen. Francis Pangilinan would keep his post as Senate majority leader, and Sen. Panfilo Lacson as Senate pro tempore.

Pangilinan is the vice president of the Liberal Party, which is headed by Drilon, as well as a member of Villar's "Alkansiyahin Ga'yup" at the Senate.

"The gentlemen's agreement was sealed before the election," Pangilinan, who acted as a go-between, said in a phone interview. The negotiations started back in April and ended weeks ago, he said.

"It is elevating his from the direction of the negotiations from the start. The only question then was who would run for two years, and who would preside in the remaining year," said Havana, who took part in the initial talks.

Drilon said he and Villar started "serious discussions" for a possible term-sharing during the June 14 presidential visit of Mr Arroyo.

Asked if Mr Arroyo was consulted in the forging of the agreement, Pangilinan said: "The President just asked how things were going [during the negotiations] ... She expressed preference for a united, consolidated majority."

Impact

"A united and consolidated majority would be one of the net effects [of this agreement]," he said. The three also strengthens the hold of the administration over the Senate and controls [illegible] the majority," he added.

Asked about the single most important factor that convinced Drilon and Villar to forge the agreement, Pangilinan said: "I think the need to strengthen the administration's hold on the Senate and consolidate the majority was paramount."

The senators expressed optimism that with the agreement, the passage of legislative measures would be [illegible]. "I think this would entail more collaborative legislative work," Flores said.

"This is also an opportunity for the transfer of the personal brand of leadership [of Drilon and Villar]," the Pulse-reflector said.

He said it was not true that the President was only supportive of Drilon, who has been for obvious reasons the senator's choice in 2001. Drilon also hails from Iloilo, one of the provinces in the Visayas that delivered a huge chunk of votes to Mr Arroyo in the May 10 elections.

The official said Villar was also able to "deliver" since Las Piñas City, the senator's hometown, was the only place in Metro Manila where Mr Arroyo won over opposition standard-bearer Fernando Poe Jr.

Drilon and other members of the administration-led coalition, particularly the president's supporters, would be informed about the agreement.

Roxas appeal

"Certainly, we will talk to each of our colleagues in the [L-A] coalition. What we have announced is our agreement ... If [coalition] we will support each other. We will seek the support of our colleagues," he said.

Earlier in the day, Sen. Manuel "Mar" Roxas II appealed to his senior colleagues to reset ties and after senior senators to again set [illegible] them in new talks, including the term-sharing of the [illegible] presidency.

"We should not be taken for granted," he said.

Pilato it had yet to be supported by members of the majority, the agreement "is a major and crucial first step in consolidating and uniting the majority in the Senate," Pangilinan said.

Both Pangilinan and Flores welcomed Drilon's announcement that they would keep their old posts. With a report from Juliet Labog-Javellana

The WORLD

Editor Lawrence B. Ibarra

3 US soldiers killed in Iraq ambushes

BAGHDAD—Insurgents ambushed two US military patrols north of Baghdad in separate attacks that killed three US soldiers and an Iraqi civilian.

In a roadside bomb attack on a US patrol in the city of Samarra, a hotbed of violence 100 km north of Baghdad, a Bradley fighting vehicle was destroyed Monday afternoon and two soldiers died, the military said.

Earlier that day, a US convoy in Beiji, 145 km north of the northern city of Mosul, began Sunday morning when a roadside bomb exploded. A vehicle with gunmen then raced toward the convoy, firing at the soldiers, who shot back and killed the driver, the military said.

A soldier and a civilian traveling behind the patrol were killed in a second roadside bomb explosion and two soldiers were wounded, the military said.

Also on Monday, a US soldier was killed by small arms fire in Baqouba, 60 km northeast of Baghdad, the military said.

Militants from a group calling itself "The Islamic Army of Iraq," headed by Al-Zarqawi Brigade" on Wednesday late dropped a deadline given to the Philippines to accept a unanimous call that it says it has withdrawn all forces from Angeles in Cebu.

A deadline for two other hostages—Bulgarian truck driver Ivaylo Kepanov and Iraqi driver Mohammed Ayad—passed Saturday without any word on their fate.

The group holding the Bulgarian, the Iraqi and Jihad movement linked to Jordanian terror suspect Abu Musab al-Zarqawi, also claimed responsibility Sunday for an attack Thursday on a military headquarters in the city of Samarra in which 35 Iraqi soldiers died and Sunday he had unconfirmed to formation the two were alive.

In a news conference in Ishiguro, Pan appealed to the hostage takers, saying Islam calls for "mercy for the poor, the hungry and the sick." He said two hostage, George Lamey, had diabetes, while the other, Ivaylo Kepanov, had suffered a stroke.

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In other developments, Iraq's national security adviser, Mouwaffak al-Rubaie, said Sunday the country would never again threaten its neighbor and would honor the Arabist Ba'athist Party as well as international agreements banning the use of weapons and biological weapons.

"Iraq officially declares it will be a country free of any weapons of mass destruction," al-Rubaie told reporters during a news conference. "Iraq will never again resort to threatening its neighbors, as Saddam did."

Saddam's alleged possession of such weapons was one of President George W. Bush's declared reasons for invading Iraq last year. The hunt for weapons of mass destruction has proved largely unsuccessful. AP

AIDS meet argues: Abstinence more effective then condoms?

BANGKOK—The controversy over whether sexual abstinence, favored by the Bush administration, or condoms are more effective in the fight against AIDS erupted as a major conference on Monday.

Ugandan President Yoweri Museveni brought the issue, which has set many AIDS activists at odds with Washington, into the open as the global AIDS conference began by saying abstinence was the best way to stem the spread of the killer virus.

The remarks by Museveni, whose country is a rare success story in Africa's war on AIDS, were at odds with health experts who back condoms as a frontline defense against the incurable disease.

"I look at condoms as an unsustainable, not a solution," Museveni told delegates at the second day of the 15th International AIDS Conference in Bangkok.

Instead, he called for "normal relationships based on love and trust instead of mechanical and irrational efforts to adapt the condom to all ideals."

Museveni added fuel to a debate within the AIDS community over the best ways to halt the spread of a disease which has killed 20 million people and infected 38 million people more.

Uganda's "ABC" method (Abstinence, Being faithful and Condoms) is a model for Bush administration's AIDS policies which are under fire this conference for advocating something other than condoms.

The smaller US delegation, which the United States says reflects a desire to cut costs, at this year's conference is seen partly as a sign of Washington's displeasure that its approach appears to have had little influence on the agenda.

US Rep. Barbara Lee, the only member of Congress to attend the week-long meeting, accused the Bush administration of using ideology, not science, to dictate policy.

She said the US AIDS initiative required that one-third of all HIV prevention funding go to "abstinence until marriage" programs.

"In an age where few million people are newly infected each year and women and girls are often denied the choice to abstain, to abstinence until marriage program is not only irresponsible, it is unconscionable," Lee said.

"Abstaining from sex is oftentimes not a choice, and therefore their only hope is preventing HIV infection is the use of condoms," she added.

Uganda, once considered an epicenter of the disease, has made its ABC anti-AIDS campaign for years in fight stigma and have successfully taken subjects into the public arena.

Official figures suggest six percent of Uganda's 26.3 million people are now infected, down from 30 percent in the 1980s. Reuters

A THAI mahout demonstration July 12 to police that a male elephant named Sudon, 19, said part of the 15th International AIDS Conference there, is safe. Police are investigating after a man was found dead near the animal earlier.

China to show air superiority in war game

BEIJING—China will use military drills this month to demonstrate its ability to dominate air space over Taiwan, an unnamed minister in any invasion of the island, state-run media reported on Monday.

Joint sea, land and air drills will take place this month at Dongshan Island, just 150 nautical miles away from Taiwan's Penghu Islands, the minority of foreign affairs confirmed.

"This year, units from missile brigades, tank brigades, marine brigades, warships and submarines, all advanced weapons will be used in the exercise," an article in the Communist Party mouthpiece People's Daily said.

In previous exercises, the amphibian has been on crossing the Taiwan Strait by ship for amphibious landing backed by missile attacks.

"But in fact, the PLA [People's Liberation Army] realized in 1996 that the basic thing of an amphibious landing of invasion on Taiwan would be hindered if mastery of the air and the sea were not gained," said the newspaper.

"That is why the PLA had decided to change its emphasis on the drills."

It said that beyond "the PLA will likely put emphasis on the seizure of an dominance over Taiwan in the 2004 military Dongshan Island exercise."

Military experts cited in the paper said the drills will test "sober" and "offensive" military drill.

Independent analysts said the focus on air dominance was a message that China was now in a position to attack Taiwan, should it want to.

"The exercise is on air supremacy is common to any PLA offensive operations in the Taiwan Strait, but the Taiwan Air Force has traditionally held the upper hand in this area," said one analyst.

"But as the PLA Air Force has made rapid improvements in its fighter aircraft capabilities acquisitions of Russian fighters and extendant weapons packages... the air balance is now beginning to gradually swing in China's favor.

Last month, Taiwan said that its air force would practice emergency landings on a freeway for the first time in 25 years amid renewed tension with China. AFP

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Koizumi suffers poll setback but keeps job

TOKYO—Japanese Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi's party suffered an embarrassing setback in a weekend upper house election that will force him to keep his job but weakens his ability to forge ahead with economic reforms.

Koizumi, whose ruling coalition remained in majority in the parliamentary election on Sunday despite the poor showing of his Liberal Democratic Party (LDP), was expected on Monday to stick to his reform agenda and to continue Japan's aid mission in Iraq.

"I think it's necessary for Japan to continue activities that will be viewed positively," Koizumi told a news conference. Koizumi told a news conference. Japan has sent 550 non-combat troops to help rebuild Iraq and pledged $5 billion to aid.

Asian stocks inflated the weak result, as the yen subsided in September but gain no chance that the changes might be.

Official results show an exit poll published by media said that Koizumi's LDP won only 49 of the 121 seats at stake in Sunday's poll, retaining its modest margin of holding on to 115.

The main opposition Democratic Party, headed by voter dismay over pension reforms and the Iraq mission, made impressive gains, winning 50 of the seats contested, up from 38.

"I would like to firmly push forward reforms, viewing this as a result of the public's tendency to place emphasis on reform while paying heed to the views of the opposition," Koizumi said about the election result.

However, media said that the poor showing would reduce the prime minister's clout within his party and would cast a shadow over his economic reforms, although some analysts said that, with no elections looming, Koizumi could forge ahead.

"Resistance towards Koizumi's reforms is likely to increase. Against this harsh environment, will it be possible to make the reforms into something fruitful?" the Asahi Shimbun daily said in an editorial.

The Sankei Shimbun daily said it was necessary for Koizumi to "exercise leadership to push policies," the Mainichi Shimbun daily said. Reuters

Diana, Masako: Different problems, similar challenges

By Anne Sinnier

SINGAPORE—Once upon a time there were two unhappy princesses caught in the media spotlight.

One princess suffered a broken marriage but found solace in a role as a celebrity envoy. The second had a publicly supportive husband but yearned for a role as a royal daughter-in-law.

Princess Diana and Japan's Princess Masako have faced starkly different problems as royal wives, but they shared the challenge of reconciling the aspirations of modern women with the demands of an ancient monarchy.

Diana's death shocked the world, but Masako's case has dragged on for years.

Until her illness, Masako had been a career woman who graduated from one of Japan's most prestigious universities and joined the elite Foreign Ministry.

Then she met Crown Prince Naruhito, a fellow Harvard graduate who was also a diplomat. They married in 1993 and she became the first commoner to enter the imperial family in 30 years.

Masako's problems began when she failed to produce a male heir to the throne. Japan's Imperial Household Law bars women from succeeding to the throne.

Masako's father, Hisashi Owada, a former vice foreign minister, said Monday that his daughter's health was improving, but he refused to say whether she was pregnant.

Japanese media have reported that Masako is pregnant and due to give birth in December.

Masako's illness has been attributed to stress, and she has been criticized for not fulfilling her duties as princess.

Diana, who died in a car crash in Paris in August 1997, was also criticized for neglecting her royal duties.

But she was loved by millions around the world for her charitable work, especially with AIDS victims and the victims of landmines.

Diana's marriage to Prince Charles was also troubled from the start. Charles admitted to having had an affair with Camilla Parker Bowles, who is now his wife.

Diana's affairs with Pakistani heart surgeon Hasnat Khan and Egyptian playboy Dodi Fayed were widely reported.

Diana's death in a car crash in Paris in August 1997 shocked the world.

Masako's mother-in-law, Queen Elizabeth, is also a commoner who married into the royal family. She has been a popular figure in Britain for decades.

Diana's two sons, Princes William and Harry, are also popular figures in Britain.

Prince William is second in line to the throne after his father, Prince Charles.

Prince Harry is third in line to the throne.

Diana's brother, Earl Spencer, has said that Diana's sons would never become king.

Diana's sons have been criticized for their behavior.

Prince Harry has been criticized for his drinking and his behavior at parties.

Prince William has been criticized for his behavior at parties.

Diana's sons have been criticized for their behavior at parties.

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100 workers held hostage in Apayao; 1 killed, 3 hurt

A TRUCK driver was killed and three others were wounded after about 10 armed men held hostage 100 employees of a lumber firm in Luna town in Apayao on Friday, the military said.

Col. Alberto Arendain of the Armed Forces of the Philippines Northern Luzon Command said the armed men demanded P6 to P10 million from Pacbilmon Group Inc., the victims' employer.

The employees, on board eight trucks, were on their way to the company compound when they were waylaid by armed men in Sabsaban village, Luna town, around 7 a.m. on Friday.

Troops from 17th Infantry Battalion caught up with the suspects and their victims in Sitio Bluegate, Sabsaban, but were unable to move in for fear of harming the hostages.

A standoff ensued between the government troops and the suspects who, Arendain said, were mostly ex-rebels.

"They used the hostages as human shields because troops had no other choice but to keep an eye on the group," Arendain said.

At around 7:20 a.m. on Saturday, firing erupted after the hostages started jumping from the trucks which the suspects were using to escape.

The standoff ended around 3 p.m. when the last of the hostages escaped from their captors who slipped through the military dragnet.

Soldiers later discovered that a truck driver was killed and another worker was injured when they refused to yield their truck to the armed men. Arendain said two suspects were also wounded.

Arendain said government troops were pursuing the armed men. Alexis Pope

8 land reform areas to get WB funding

EIGHT agrarian reform communities in southern Mindanao stand to receive part of the $16 million in poverty assistance loans from the World Bank.

Agrarian Reform Secretary Jose Mari Boncodin said WB-funded phase II of the Agrarian Reform Community Development Project will benefit 80 land reform communities in 17 provinces, including eight ARCs in southern Mindanao.

"The program aims to raise the beneficiaries' household income by improving productive assets, road infrastructure and access to key support services," Ponce said.

The eight agrarian reform communities are located in Samal Island and in Mati, Davao Oriental. Jaymar Arboleda

Cha-cha, barangay polls pushed

THE HOUSE leadership's holding of a plebiscite on the proposed amendments to the 1987 Constitution and the barangay elections in May 2005 was proposed yesterday by a consultant-expert.

Rep. Constantino Jaraula Calixto, Cagayan de Oro and the ratification of the proposed amendments to the charter by the people through a plebiscite next year would allow sufficient time to effect the shift to a parliamentary-federal form of government by 2007.

"We will have an easy transition by 2007 if we have a plebiscite in May 2006," Jaraula said in a phone interview.

Jaraula also said that it will also be cheaper to hold the two political exercises simultaneously.

In this developed, Jaraula welcomed the proposal of Speaker Jose de Venecia Jr. for a 120-day moratorium on discussions on Charter change.

De Venecia said the moratorium will allow Congress to pass the revenue measures needed by the government to start cleaning the dismal debt crisis.

But Jaraula noted that the moratorium should not mean that the Senate and House committees on consideration of amendments must stop from holding internal discussions separately.

"The two committees could debate separately away from the public eye," Jaraula said.

He said the two panels can still discuss the proposed rules on a joint session by Congress sitting as a constituent assembly to introduce changes in the charter.

Once the rules have been harmonized out at the committee level, these could then be ratified for undue discussions in all-party caucuses involving members of Congress, he said.

"If the rules are passed in the committees, it would greatly reduce the amount of time we devote to their approval in the plenary," Jaraula said.

Jaraula noted that both Senate and House need only one session day to approve the proposed rules in separate plenary sessions.

Jaraula explained that De Venecia's 100-day moratorium must come exactly 100 days from the opening of session of the 13th Congress on July 26.

"That would cover up to December or even January because aside from the revenue measures, Congress will also take up the proposed national budget," Jaraula said.

"The reason that the committees on constitutional amendments can work at their own level before making a report to their respective chambers," Jaraula said. Carlito Pablo

THURSDAY, JULY 11, 2004

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

REAL ESTATE

Lilia-Cesar O. Hargrove

Buying a home during the rainy season

By Rhoda A. Acosta

"A YOUNG married couple had just moved in to their new home. They started house hunting from January of this year and had spent almost every weekend searching for the perfect home. They finally found their dream home in April and have moved in with May to settle the family before the start of the monsoon rains."

The said couple is the average home buyer as home sales are usually brisk during the rainy days from November to May. This is also the time in which most home buyers hone for their dream home. The rainy season is every home seller's nightmare since fewer home buyers look for a home during these months.

BUILDING DREAMS

Local scenario

The rainy season is what real estate developers consider a lean season in which they feel a slow down in property purchases. This is also in the season that most home buyers do not have the feeling and energy to shop for a home unless there is continuous rain. Maybe another reason is that the high tuition fees had just eaten up the family savings in store so the down payment for the home has to be realigned.

From a real estate developers' perspective, the rainy season may be a less stressful time for real estate buyers, this can be a good opportunity to look for a property and it does not matter whether one is looking for a vacant lot, house-lot/unit, commercial property or a residential home.

Typical home problems

Buying a home during the rainy season can offer the home buyer a situation that cannot be experienced during the dry season—that is, continuous rain that may bring out the defects of a poorly built home. The typical home problems coming out during the rainy season that cannot be detected during summer are seams, floods, roof leaks, ground subsidence, pipeless walls, warping cabinets, flooded streets, missing pillars.

Visiting a property during the

COMMUNE with nature is one of the enticing clichés at Greenwoods.

Built to be close to nature

Text and photos by Charles E. Bulson

A DEVELOPER has a choice to either completely transform a land in tandem with the master plan (like a golf course over a former forest land) or stack around the land's topography and work on the best of it to enhance the project's character.

In the case of Jardine Land, it decided to adopt the latter option when Greenwoods in Dasmariñas, Cavite, was developed several years ago.

Says Jardine Land executive vice president and chief operations officer Harry Rodrigues Jr.: "I grew up in Baguio where there are many brooks and fruit trees and forests. They reminded me of that place when I first saw this property and immediately decided not to take them out and instead work around the natural beauty. The result, I believe, was excellent and our residents like the result of our efforts."

Running along Greenwoods

The brook Rodrigues was referring to runs along the entire length of 60-hectare Greenwoods property.

Along its route, Jardine Land designer—world renowned landscape consultancy firm Skidmore, Owings & Merrill—constructed picnic grounds, running decks, an amphitheater, jogging and biking paths and pocket gardens.

"Greenwoods was built to be closer to nature," reveals Rodrigues. "We did not even cut the big trees where we could have built another unit. In fact, we even planned new ones to make the whole property greener."

THIS jasmine de Luxe model is perfect for a growing family.

First project in Cavite

Greenwoods is Jardine Land's first housing project in Cavite. The other development is located in Mandaluyong City catering to the middle market.

It is an hour's drive from Makati City via the Skyway, Alabang-Zapote Road and located just a kilometer from Governor's Drive and three kilometers away from Aguinaldo Highway.

Greenwoods is very near prestigious schools like Brent International and St. Paul's College in Intramuros, Cavite. Shopping destinations such as Robinsons Metro East SM City is also a short drive away.

"Living in Greenwoods also provides our residents the convenience of being near recreational establishments like the Enchanted Kingdom, many short driveway trips to fine beaches of Caylabne, Puerto Azul or to play first-class golf in Southwoods, Riviera, Orchard and Tagaytay Highlands," relates Rodrigues.

Maximizing space

The units, designed by Associates Firm Father Pendleton and Associates of San Francisco, were conceived to maximize living spaces while at the same time, incorporate amenities of upper income homes.

Greenwoods features six models to choose from—ranging from the half two-story Alhambra to the full two-story Jasmine de Luxe. All units have two bedrooms, two toilet and bath (T&B) in the Alhambra and one T&B in the Jasmine and Jasmine de Luxe features three bedrooms, three toilets and baths (3 T&B in) in floor area of 200 sq m to 300 sq m.

"In our Renaissance area, which is also within Greenwoods, are other lot and ready two-story with a two-car garage. You can buy a lot from us and then build the house over here," says Rodrigues. "Once the project is ready, our sales director from a range of lovely house designs or get his or her own contractor, or let Jardine Land build the house. It's their choice," he adds.

THE Lorenzo located in the middle of the property, restored in its original state.

For starting families

"Also within Greenwoods, Jardine Land also built Greenwood Heights, a section specifically designed for starting families," assures Rodrigues.

There are currently two models in a choice from: Pluto and Hibiscus. Both units offer a minimum lot area of 88 sq m, with floor areas ranging from 34 sq m to 54 sq m.

"All houses have the standard features of a living area, dining area, kitchen, bedroom(s), a porch, and a carport," adds Rodrigues.

Hershe assures that Greenwoods is a complete community with a clubhouse, a gazebo, a clubhouse, a swimming pool, basketball and tennis courts and a Village Square consisting of lots intended for selected convenient commercial services and institutions.

"And I'll get only the best amenities here," promises Rodrigues.

Jardine Land, with its development subsidiary Jardine Properties Inc. is a joint venture formed by five leading companies. Besides Dasmariñas, San Miguel Properties, Hong Kong Land, Metropolitan Bank and Trust Co. and Equitable Bank.

ROBINSONS LAND

A view from the top of the high-rise game

LIVING within your means could very well mean living in style. At least that is if you are dealing with Robinsons Land Corp. The winning proposition of affordable lifestyles has catapulted the company to be among the strongest real estate players in the country today with its own empire of impressive high-rise projects around Metro Manila.

RLC High Rise Buildings Division general manager Danilo S. Ignacio said the company's formidable reputation for leadership is borne of its commitment to bring to the consumers in the country the core of the consumers is the company's generally optimistic outlook about the Philippine economy, which other industry players are just beginning to appreciate. "Many of the developers are now starting coming back to the scene," Ignacio said. "They are now starting to see what RLC knew a long time ago." he added.

No uncompleted project

RLC is one of the country's very few real estate firms that remained entirely in business despite the heavy blow of the 1997 Asian financial crisis. "We never left a record of uncompleted projects even in the worst business climate. It is very important for condo buyers to know that you can continue developing, and more important, continue to honor your commitments to your buyers," Ignacio explained.

This solid reputation for delivering what it can deliver as excellent performances.

Emerging market needs

"Understandably we focus on the PHP 1.5 to P3 million income residential market but we are also quick to respond to emerging market needs where there is strong perceived demand," said Ignacio. He noted that this principle was the driving force behind several of their previous upscale projects like the Galleria Regency and the Robinsons Place Residences in Manila. Today the company is gearing for an expected upsurge in demand for office space and has lined up a number of projects in strategic locations near the CBDs.

The company is also widely known for being "quick in the market," meaning that they know exactly what to make out of a property even before purchasing it and are able to quickly deploy its assets for its fulfillment. "A good illustration of this is Fifth Avenue Place, which are situated right across the street from our flagship mall the Robinsons Galleria. We offered these units in the market only months after we purchased the land. So other developers has even launched a project in these materials time," Ignacio noted. The company's built-to-economy and built-to-custom modeling practices are also to be credited for this.

Strong commitment

With the election period over, the sale of the Fifth Avenue Place is expected to even increase. Indeed, a solid investment remains undeniable whenever the situation. This is especially true when the reasons for buying are simply compelling, just like with Fifth Avenue Place.

"Our investors are unanimous in getting great value for their money," said Ignacio. "They particularly note satisfaction about the strategic location of the project, which is located around the Fort Bonifacio Global City's periphery away from the expected traffic congestion in the center," he added.

The strong sense of personal attachments to their own property is matched only by the company's strong commitment to the country. "RLC continues to have faith in the country and it will continue to be a strong partner and long term player in the economy" Ignacio is proud to note.

FOR RICH. The Fifth Avenue Place is just a proof of the company's image as a major real estate player in the country.

Buying a home during the rainy season

Posted on August 2004

RAINY season can give the home buyer information that can never be discovered during the dry season. These are:

• Access Roads—In a continuous heavy rain, you will be able to discover the possible routes and the impassable ones. By this, you can decide on which house you will would want to live on. Access roads are as important as the site itself. If for example you are buying a house in the mountains that are several hundred feet above sea level but the access roads leading to it are always flooded with 5 slight rain, then the property may not be desirable at all.

• Flooded Areas—The area that you are looking at can be observed whether it is flooded or not. The best way to check is by going down yourself during a heavy rain. You may even ask the residents themselves if the area floods when it rains. If you can see sandbags and unusually elevated homes in the area, then it may be a sign that the subdivision easily gets flooded.

• Unsatisfied Electrical Lines—If poorly maintained (and dangerous) electrical system sometimes shows its symptoms during the rainy season. Ask a professional to check out these defects for you.

• Leaking Roofs and Cookings—A wet ceiling is mainly due to a leaking roof. In case you are viewing a home where it is not raining, be specifically cautious about watermarks in the ceiling. These are signs of a defective roof system.

• Porous Walls—Towards end walls that are continuously exposed to rainfall manifest leaks and moisture if they are not properly made and maintained. We can only observe these defects when it is raining.

• Overflowing Rivers—If you are buying a property that is adjacent or near a river, then you must check if the river overflows when there is a heavy rainfall. You may ask the neighbors on the situation for better yet—go there yourself during a heavy rain.

• Warped Cabinets—If the wall behind the cabinet has a water leak, then the wooden cabinet would naturally warp. Warped cabinets are the product of excessive moisture that usually comes from leaking ceilings and walls.

Final Note. Buying a property you are considering during a heavy rain can give you very important information that you will never get during the dry months—from the time to bike. Yes, it may be difficult to push yourself to visit your dream home when it is raining but most of us would rather stay home! But for sure, it has its rewards. So if you are still looking for your dream home, get up and look for it this season.

So the next time it rains very hard, remember that it may just be the best time to look for a home.

E-mail the author or answer@pinoy.net.ph or call 852-0000.

CLM

UAP gears up for Conex 2005

THE UNITED Architects of the Philippines recently launched its campaign for the forthcoming Convention Exhibits (Conex 2005) trade exhibition of the Philippine Plastics Show.

To be held at the World Trade Center from March 17 to April 3 next year, the four-day event aims to create public awareness of current trends in the construction and real estate industry and to provide a convenient venue for showcasing the latest product lines.

Objectives

Organized by the UAP to coincide with its 31st National Convention on the same dates, Conex 2005 was conceptualized to develop an open exhibition market serving to enhance sales productivity, open opportunities for public interaction, forge and sustain close contacts, generate market presence, launch new products, disseminate information, ascertain client needs, influence client decisions, making and close deals.

To date, the exhibit has become the barometer in the industry and has been generating positive feedback from suppliers and participants. Although the event had enjoyed a steady stream of supporters from the past few years, this year marks Conex's major leap in terms of its choice of venue and its expected number of participants.

Significant boost

In fact, Conex's active participants through the years have noted a significant boost in their marketing strategies by gaining access to hundred interested and first time show of ideas. It has become better attuned so they get to hone their competitive edge and down their guns aside open to newer technology innovations.

Openness with this novel ex-permit format, the UAP organizers have allotted 400 booths divided into two large rooms.

Better alternative

"We are looking forward to a well-attended convention this year," exclaims architect Alejandro G. Ona, UAP's executive director for the Commission on Conventions and Conventions.

"That's why we're deliberately geared to make it better in conjunction with the UAP's 31st national convention, where we expect to be visited by more than 1,500 architects and by over some foreign architects and members of the allied professions. We can give a better alternative for discerning companies' reaches in the plastic sector. UAP is our event manager of 50 Barcon exhibits and 12 SEA exhibits.

With ample time to market their biggest clients for their deals, the UAP board of directors is pulling no stops in ensuring the event's success. "We seek the help of our media allies, for are looking forward to another record of monthly patronage for the Conex," Ona witnesses.

Renewed commitment

Living up to its renewed commitment for professionalism, the UAP board of directors has appointed Conex's global partner through the implementation of comprehensive marketing solutions in the construction community.

Conex's new logo also reflects the team's dynamic spirit. Their responsive attention, inspiration and creativity which echo their desire to create collaborative channels. Its standard of energy, passion, dedication and excellence unfolds confidence and the courage of partnership as well. The bright orange line reflecting enthusiasm and promises a general sense of wellness.

1929–1942 PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER Vol. XV No. 219

OPINION

Old mistake

THE IRAQI militants holding Angelo de la Cruz have given the Philippine government an additional 48 hours to agree to pull our Filipino troops from Iraq by July 20 or they would behead him.

We say that the government should accede to the rapists' demand and withdraw the Philippine contingent from Iraq even before July 20. The Filipino troops should leave that troubled country as soon as possible.

EDITORIAL

The Philippine government should pull out the Filipino troops because it is the right thing to do. From the very beginning there was no legal or moral justification for the presence of the coalition forces in Iraq. The invasion did not have widespread international support. The United States and its allies invaded Iraq on the excuse that it had weapons of mass destruction. At the time of the invasion, the coalition had no evidence of such weapons of destruction. After the invasion's inspection groups turned up nothing—no evidence whatsoever.

Subsequently, hearings in the United States showed that the intelligence-gathering agencies did not have evidence that there were weapons of mass destruction. The United States and its allies invaded Iraq on the basis of a lie, and therefore the invasion had no moral justification. The Philippines cannot be part of an immoral act. It can thus rightly withdraw its troops by July 20, without waiting for the agreed date of Aug. 20.

The Arroyo administration should think not just of Angelo de la Cruz but of other Filipino workers in Iraq who are facing great risks. So long as the Filipino troops remain in Iraq, Filipino workers risk being taken hostage and killed.

The administration should also realize that the presence of Filipino troops in Iraq, no matter how small it the contingent, and no matter that it has been labeled a "humanitarian" group, is angering Arab and Muslim countries that are sympathetic to the plight of the Iraqi people. The coalition forces are being viewed as invaders and aggressors and the Filipino troops are being lumped with them and are becoming the subject of Arab hatred.

The Muslim and Arab nations of the Middle East like Filipinos—but as construction workers, not as soldiers. The Arroyo administration may be frittering away this goodwill, built over decades, by acting like a running dog of the United States and continuing to maintain troops in Iraq.

If the Arroyo administration really wanted to send a "humanitarian" contingent to Iraq, it should have sent civilian doctors, nurses, engineers and technicians. They could have helped in the reconstruction and relief efforts but they would not have been identified with the troops of the United States and its allies. A contingent of Filipino civilians could have gained a lot of goodwill from the Iraqi people.

Even from the pragmatic point of view, the presence of Filipino troops in Iraq is indefensible. What has the Philippines gotten in return for its subservience to the United States and its readiness to send troops to join the coalition forces in Iraq? Has it received hundreds of millions of dollars' worth of assistance? Has it gotten juicy contracts in the Iraq reconstruction efforts? Per its subservience, tagalying aninsulo around the United States, the Philippines has gotten nothing but crumbs.

Also from the practical, political point of view, it does not make sense to continue to play the role of running dog of US President George W. Bush. He is facing a hard fight in the coming US presidential election, and there is a strong possibility that he will lose. Ms Arroyo does not have to cozy to him. The next US administration may just decide to pull out the US troops from Iraq. The Philippines cannot be more papish than the pope.

The decision to send Philippine troops to Iraq was a mistake from the very beginning. President Arroyo would be removing a mistake if she decides to withdraw the troops even before the scheduled pullout date of Aug. 20. She has even more reason to pull out the troops now that the life of a Filipino—an overseas worker, one of the thousands she has called modern-day heroes—is hanging in the balance.

'Hot and homeless money'

VIEWPOINT

Juan L. Mercado

A $10(MD) bitter modern-day "reconstruction consortium" was a wee staple. And there was great irony: Ferdinand Marcos, who postured as a World War II hero, financed Japanese reparations for bogus foundations.

Still, some shrugged at The San Herald's of many others report that Marcos funneled $100 million (at current exchange rates) from "Chairs" to "Arts," links to shell foundations. It benefited a projected 23-year-old former Playboy model, Brenda Bajraszewski.

Marcos designated as "sole and only beneficiaries" Asian capital Pty. Ltd., set up by Hagens. The courts found out then "there were regular transfers of money which went to Evelin Hagens."

Between 1982 and 1985, Marcos' Vitay Foundation transferred $200,000 (worth $766,000 today) to Credit Suisse in Hong Kong credited "Victoria Valdes," Frank Walker wrote.

The Basel-based case Reporter recalled memos today, with a daughter named Avalon Angeli. Marcos' mother was Josefa Edralin.

That's the latest dressed in a dropper's fancy expenses, some warned, this massive graft manhood out capacity to be shocked." "The evil that men do lives after them!"

But pseudo-benevolence provides havens for what the GAO found out: Treasurer Robert T. Madsen calls "hot and homeless money." It bagged millions in Illinois, Atlanta, Mexico and Medellin.

An earlier San Herald report, in Oct, claimed that 60 accounts, in six Swiss banks, underwrote $100-million Marcos foundations. "At the core of Swiss banks and Lichtenstein accounts was a string of foundations set up by Marcos and his cronies," Walker wrote.

One month, noted Carl Bildt reliable, slashed in Zug, Lichtenstein, Seychelles," between 1977 to 1986, some "unidentified, organized and ill-gotten wealth" by Marcos. Did they do any to it of philanthropy work there?

A crackdown, on, al-Qaida funding overwhelmed devoted Lichtenstein in bank-ness Avenue, Aa Observer investigates to report on this supine prompt policy of 32 other societies involved "Trouble In Banking Paradise to Undo Swiss Haven's Rules by."

"Offshore trusts, secretive 'foundations' have been systematically misused by a variety of unsavoury officials," the Observer's Conal Walsh wrote. These include "former Philippine rulers Ferdinand Marcos [and] Colombian drug lord Pablo Escobar," a dozen top al-Qaeda financial backers, mostly wealthy Saudis, were pinpointed.

Lichtenstein now curbs anonymous customers. LGT Bank, owned by the royal family, now assures clergy by 5 percent "Even Rumsfeld, the ruling palace, was pragmatic to pay the price for respectability," this sunny shell foundation still operates.

A report by the Bundeskriminalamt (BKA), Germany's intelligence agency, pinpoints 20 secretive cells "hundred investments from Swiss." The bewilderment ranged from Germany's Christian Democrat Party; Kreuz guillotine of the Middle ruled Mobutu, the late Ceausescu, and Ferdinand Marcos.

BKA spotlighted Lichtenstein's Herbert Batliner, a "fund management firm," as a conduit for unanimous more than $30,000 mailbox companies and foundations." Batliner was alleged to "have helped Marcos loot money from the Philippines," Conal writes. "According to BKA, Rudolf Bitzi, brother of a Lichtenstein minister, also worked for Marcos." Two brothers, Engelbert Schreiber and Peter Forstmoser, also reportedly advised the Marcos family, as well as the Marcos-cloaking groups and a senior Liechtenstein notary.

Scraps of BKA report totaled up to a Philippine tribunal investigating corruption." But Berliner, Bates, Schreiber and Forstmoser have denied any wrongdoing. Eventually, the government rejected the Gate of The Germans report and turns of its findings," the Observer adds. But the "bank-client connection" spikes one wonder.

The Observers have no franchise on the dubious chronicle. Joseph Estrada's Jetsetter Youth Foundation didn't have a single scholar. "Some are his darlings or public relations cronies," writes the Inquirer's Michael Tan. "Their secret to be those more out of a troubled zone of soldiers' oblige, or the rich the outing home strange to the poor."

Mistakes Bed Espina's miserable Estrada-ness have been flayed. In Indonesia's "shameless Conglomerate" controlled by Indian's and family cornered 40 percent of economics. Rash of bankruptcies was capped for tapping dictator's Indonesian aka but money "conduit."

Financial business have no baggage sacks," John B. Rockefeller's replied when asked why he cited the 4 Rockefeller Hotels. Blackfeet, Reed, Rockefeller, Mellon and other foundations have done much good.

Legitimate foundations spend "safety-nets" for the poor, that Spain lately scrapped government-aid to do. Many provide scholarships, nutritious foods, subsidized jobs. Here, the Philippine Business for Social Progress and the Magsaysay Award Foundation come to mind.

And hundreds of self-effacing individuals share their little. Rhoda de Medeiros Estrada-ess Rosales calls this "theology of the outside."

It is right reflex in Lessig, Estrada deserved the opposition would "continue the legacy of Marcos ... give proceeds of Marcos foundations, wealth and assets. This is the last will of Ferdinand Marcos."

Which foundations. Tilay se ngis, mentins, "Mabuti, Chavit and Pidato?" Or Spring Mistral or Lorenzo? And did that law remember have Australian and Lichtenstein interest?

(E-mail: juan_mercado@yahoo.com.ph)

Anger

THERE'S THE RUB

Conrado de Quiros

I DON'T know how the story about Angelo de la Cruz having been released came about. I did hear there is his. Some say the other night it hadn't really been confirmed, it was just the word they got from a source in Iraq and they had no reason to disbelieve it, but until Doña Gloria came get safe and sound, Mrs. Tomas said, the word guaranteeing it.

That is all very well, but you would think Malacañang would have come to some record that eighteen hostages of varying false hopes. Wherever told the De la Cruzes despite had been freed (they point to GMA herself should be blamed, and Ishmael Bernardo). Someone would tell me later it was an unfortunate Encomienda that is arrogant change, to cast another false shadow in the situation. But still, they themselves in media reality, making the news to the world and sending the country into a frenzy of celebration. But there is nothing distinctly Kapampangan about it. It is a human trait. People who are drawn to despair will cling to the slightest hope, seeing a flowing glimpse of light into glowing sunrise.

That is the unkindest cut of all. The only thing worse than non-learning is what has happened to you learned now to get you used be to talk: only to have your hope dashed to pieces. That is a roller-coaster ride in emotions, being plunged from high to low at lightning speed. A roller coaster at least is kept to an ride by us hinges. A human need to not, when not opposing stability seems to be their aim.

That is clearly the reason Malacañang is keeping the De la Cruzes away from public view to prevent them from expressing their bitterness to the world. To prevent them from turning the frenzy of celebration that gripped the nation in the wee hours of Sunday to a tempo of condemnation of the government. If De la Cruz can make a people in joy, he can make them angry.

Yesterday morning, while waiting for more news about De la Cruz, I heard the anchors on TV share my fear at least the deadline for Doña Gloria, Ara Observer investigates to report on this supine prompt policy of 32 other societies involved "Trouble In Banking Paradise to Undo Swiss Haven's Rules by."

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Tributes

Political Tidbits

Belinda Olivares-Cassiman

WHILE the entire nation prepares for the safe release of Filipino overseas worker Angelo de la Cruz in Iraq, let me have one spiky thing tribute-paid on several outstanding personalities. Last Tuesday evening, I enjoyed cocktail hours-of-diamond music in the residence of German Ambassador Herbert Beck. It was a truly sensational experience. An ensemble of three twists some of the most distinguished stars of the Philippine musical world for an impromptu concert that, as one observer noted, would have easy millions to match. The Filipinos, guitarist Noel Ferol Mendiola of "Heaven in the Park" fame, surged the impromptu concert as a tribute to the popular German envoy and his French wife Micheline, who will leave Manila for a new posting in Hungary early next month. The entire trio took turns to submit their pieces to their songs of paper to please Bella Saret-Ben Hess, artistic director of the Ateneo Dept Festival, who chose to wear a swimming thread from the dazzling glitterati of talent.

* * *

**Because it was a tribute to Jun, the artists performed mainly the music famous German composers such as Beethoven, Bach, Mozart and Schubert with some French works by Debussy and Chopin for the French lady of the house, aside from some modern compositions of Jeffrey Ching and some Viennese and Hungarian music. At the end of the concert, Ambassador Beck told the young duo to name Filipino artists their feelings about the genial first-class diplomat. "Sinong Kin Kuwalas", Antonio Buenaventura Jr. Sinong Kin Kuwalas", Antonio Buenaventura Jr. Sinong Kin Kuwalas", Antonio Buenaventura Jr.

What says MIAA now?

THIS refers to the letter of Butch L. Icasiano (PDI, 7/6/04) May we inform the public that the Ninoy Aquino International Terminal 2 is owned by the national government and operated by the Manila International Airport Authority (MIAA). Philippine Airlines is a mere tenant in the terminal, a mere the MIAA is in no of the facilities.

It is, therefore, erroneous to call Terminal 2 the "PAL terminal," as if PAL owned and runs the place. It is the MIAA that has responsibility for providing the flying public and airport tenants with basic airport services, including adequate baggage carts, porters and security.

While we commiserate with Icasiano expressing regarding the shortage of porters and baggage carts, we are as much a victim of this glaring deficiency. We are unfairly blamed for something we have no control and have no control of whatsoever. To top it all, we are being charged fees for a basic service that we have manifestly desired.

Indeed, in one of the closing paragraphs of Icasiano's letter, he rightly asked: "Who is responsible for this misdemeanor? Where does the State management come in? Whom do we complain to?"

Of course, it would have been much preferable had Icasiano aimed such concerns to the beginning of his letter, instead of hinting MIA first and asking questions later.

Nevertheless, we shall take this to our more and simply redirect his complaint to the MIAA, care of its general manager, Edgardo C. Manda. In fact, we have already stated that in our early with Manda and were invited to respond.

—EDGARDO, FILENCIA, M.,
vice president,
Airport Services Department,
Philippine Airlines,
PO Box 1240, Makati City

LETTERS

If you have any complaints, grievances or suggestions about the treatment of news and photos by the Inquirer, you may write to the Readers' Advocate, Philippine Daily Inquirer, Chino Roces Avenue, corner Yague and Blumentritt Streets, City of Makati; or send a fax to 896-4750, 897-4704, or e-mail readersadvocate@inquirer.com.ph.

Writers of letters to the editor are requested to include their complete address and telephone or pager number or e-mail address for verification purposes. The Inquirer will not publish any letter unless such information is supplied.

The truth about Jaworski

THIS is a reaction to Neal Cruz's column (on July 5, which included former Sen. Ruben Jaworski in the list of legislators who have nowhere anything for the country during their stints in office. Was I know the basis for such a sweeping allegation?

I was serving as a former member of the staff and one who had first-hand knowledge of what he did as legislator. His accomplishments in the legislative record have touched on the pages of newspapers. But I must say that they are nonetheless significant.

Let me cite a few. As the chair of the Committee on Environment and Natural Resources, he spearheaded the Clean Air Act and authored the Clean Water Act. As chair of the Committee on Economic Affairs, he pushed numerous bills for the development of small and medium-scale businesses and for the protection of artisanal or cottage industries. Through such committees, he worked hard to bring succor to the hundreds of thousands of Filipinos who were victims of "pyramid" scams. Let me reiterate—these are just a few of his accomplishments in a nutshell.

The work of a senator is as legislator, and I don't see where the former senator was remiss in this mandate. He was not for an highly schooled or an expert trained in public service or other professional set, but I believe that he did his job well in a manner of the land.

As the answer of his and responsible journalism, may I suggest that volunteers look into the records of the Senate of the Philippines for them to be properly informed of Mr. Jaworski's accomplishments. I believe it is important that columnists respect their commitments with them, especially when passing manner in a bad light.

I might having written the letter just now. This might have removed more time for Mr. Jaworski and I might have begun my job. But as the saying goes, "it's better late than never." The Filipino people deserve to know the truth.

—JAMES S. QUIRINO,
[ADDRESS withheld by Inquirer],
Sangkat, Makati City

Biking for more livable communities

THIS is a reaction to the news item about Fr. Ruben Amoroso. ("Slovenly priest stabbed dead by 2 robbers" PDI, 6/15/04). It's easy to see why Padre Ruben was held up on the Tarlac-Pangasinan-Ilocos Norte (Tarlac) area at 6:30 a.m. The priest's dad, Lolan, Father Ruben is not the first cyclist held up in that area.

The Pedal Brigade, a volunteer group that promotes cycling for clean air and sustainable living, is deeply concerned about the safety of bicycle commuters. We feel that Father Ruben's violent death may discourage many Filipinos who bike to and from work.

"Bike commuters" boom polluted air and nuisance drivers—even as they must endure the lack of bike-friendly facilities—because biking is cost-effective. Bicycles are cheap and need little maintenance. Unlike cars owners, cyclists need not worry about periodic smog-ups, oil price hikes, or expensive parking areas.

Bike commuting contributes the most part of one's day into the best part. Just think: The average speed on Metro Manila's streets is 20 kph. Bike measures up to those cars for hours, pressing themselves out, cyclists zip past heavy traffic.

Biking is also a fun way to fit exercise into one's daily life.

Biking builds better communities. Less stressed people in, and hours, and driving encourages us to see other drivers and pedestrians only as "obstacles" and "traffic." Biking puts us in more direct contact with society. In so doing, it improves a community's livability. Bike-friendly cities, like San Francisco and Copenhagen, where people can regularly be seen out bicycling, have been recognized for their high quality of life. San Francisco enjoys the highest quality of life in the United States, according to a survey by Mercer Human Resource Consulting. It also is consistently ranked by Bicycling Magazine as a top city for cycling. Copenhagen, on the other hand, has the sixth highest quality of life in the world, according to Mercer. It is also home to the world's most successful community bicycle program.

The seamless, bike-friendly streetscapes induced traffic, better air quality, and improved public health. "These livability initiatives in increased quality of life, higher property values, and heightened community spirit," notes Enrique Peñalosa, executive director of the League of American Bicyclists.

Clearly, biking should be encouraged in our cities. For starters, Caloocan Mayor Reboso Echiverri can improve street lighting and police visibility in the Tarlac area. We also appeal to all local government officials to join us in going bike-friendly measures such as installing bike parking facilities and bike lanes, enacting car-free days, and investing in better road safety education for all road users. These measures will help create bike-friendly streets and better communities.

—BENJAMIN LOUIS C. DALISAY,
Advocacy and Campaigns Officer,
The Pedal Brigade
(www.thepedalbrigade.org),
(dalisay@yahoo.com)

Across the NATION
Assistant Editor Tony Bergonia

₱200-M Bataan housing project probed

By Greg Rebusoras
(TH Limited Custom Desk)

BALANGA CITY—Newly elected Gov. Enrique Garcia is looking into the ₱200-million loan from the Pag-Ibig Fund to finance the development of a low-cost housing project of the previous administration.

When he assumed office on June 3, Garcia looked for the book of accounts of the controversial ₱200-million housing loan to make things clear first.

It turned out that the official records were kept by lawyer Renato Begaya, former Bataan provincial administrator who became president of the Bataan Provincial Development Corp. (BPDC) tasked with overseeing the Peninsula Heights housing project.

Begaya said there was nothing irregular in the project since all records were available for scrutiny by any concerned party.

The project was started in 1994 at Barangay Cupang in Samal, Bataan, on a 76-hectare land functioned by the provincial government.

Of the total land area, only 29 hectares have been used for the housing project.

Records at the provincial development and planning office showed that major development and construction of 300 houses amounted to more than ₱98 million. That included to the amount were the cost of compensation given to some 120 squatters residing near the housing project.

The residents demanded payments for their plants and relocation sites.

About ₱3 million was also spent for the clearing operation in the area, sources close to Begaya said.

Begaya admitted though that the loan was ₱200 million but the amount released was only ₱192 million after deducting interest and surcharges.

The amount was the loan approved for by the BPDC from the Pag-Ibig Fund but was charged to the provincial capitol.

Sources from the local Commission on Audit indicated that the transaction was irregular but some auditors said otherwise, prompting the BPDC to remain unbiased by critics of the administration under former Gov. Leonardo Soriano.

The BPDC was formed by the then governing Pambansang Ia PMP to oversee properties of the provincial government and developup them into business ventures to generate jobs for residents.

Roundup

20 kids poisoned

CAMALIG CITY—At least 20 children, hungry after attending school in Zone district, were rushed to a government run hospital here on Thursday morning after they fell ill from eating the seeds of an inedible plant for breaking apricots. The children, aged six to 11, had complained of severe stomach ache, nausea and vomiting after eating the seeds in the house of Arnel Gonzales Sr., a driver of Zone Barangay Council, and three of his sons and a nephew were vomiting and suffering from diarrhea. He said the children visited him and ate the seeds of the plant. Talks to a tomatoes enthusiast's middle-aged boy. Richard's office. (PDI)

Reneh Jay C. Bartol, PDI Bicolano Bureau

Army man shot dead

CUMMING CITY—Unidentified gunmen shot dead Friday morning an Army corporal, who overheard a conversation between the NPA hostage and their abductors here, former resp. Bagak Legaspi, police station 1 chief, said Cpl. Arnel Pabilo was driving his car for the downtown area from Barangay Fatuay Heights. E when two men stopped him around 8:30 a.m. Pabilo reportedly rolled down the window and talked with the suspects. One of the two pulled out a .45 cal. pistol and shot the soldier three in the head. Legaspi said Pabilo managed to raise a handgun and fire at the suspects but it was not clear if he hit any of them. Bystanders rushed him to the hospital but he died along the way. Alain G. Hernandez, PDI Bicolano Bureau

Murder case dismissed

SOLANO, Nueva Vizcaya— The provincial prosecutor's office here has dismissed the murder case filed against two businessmen, a former local executive and six others in the killings of retired Army Maj. Gen. Rodolfo Aguinaldo and his wife in December last year. Bailey advised the complainants "to seek the help of the National Bureau of Investigation or any investigating agency to reopen the case for investigation." Jim Alcon Cinco, PDI Northern Luzon Bureau

Village official slain

CITY OF SAN FERNANDO, Pampanga— Two gunmen shot dead a village councilman of Barangay San Agustin in this province on Wednesday, police said. Rodolfo Cornejo, 54, said on his way home from a meeting when two men shot him to death around a mahogany shed about 10 meters away. Police said several motives could be behind the killing, including a business deal between Cornejo and the suspects. Jun Mabig, PDI Central Luzon Desk

Fishermen rescue 6 persons

QUEZON— A motorized boat with six persons on board capsized at around 10 p.m. Friday after it was hit by a huge wave off Pagbang barrio, Atimonan town. Six fishermen were rescued by passing fishermen after swimming for 4 hrs. Saturday or six hours after the accident. One of the rescuers, Lito Lagat, the only boat still capsized. Tell

Jeanne Aquino, PDI Regional Bureau

Trade fair, reunion

CABALUAY, Leyte— Isabel has called "Expo 2004 in Lapaz, Quezon" and has held as part of the grand alumni homecoming of the Lopez National Comprehensive High School on Aug. 19-21 in the campus. For details, call Lucena Galeria (09193551158), Ros Pilacanta (09184541553) and Nancy Florida Flores (09157110982).

SAYBREAK
A fisherman returns his day early in Barangay Salvacion, Santiago, Ilocos Sur, casting his net into the sea in the hope of a bountiful catch.

Agri officials draw up ostrich meat standards

BACOLOD CITY—Agriculture officials have drawn up new standards for a burgeoning ostrich meat market, following an appeal made by Bagnis-based ostrich breeders.

The National Meat Inspection Commission (NMIC) advised the Philippine Import-Export Ostrich Foundation that draft guidelines for the franchise of ostrich abattoirs are being reviewed by the agriculture department.

Mirella Wenceslao, NMIC deputy executive director, said she had sent two government experts to Australia to "observe the slaughtering process of ostrich because the procedures and equipment needed for dressing an ostrich are different from dressing poultry and other avian species."

Peter Desmarets, one of the foundation's founders, petitioned the Department of Agriculture to rationalize and provide regulations for the ostrich meat trade, after noting that local retail "runs by the wayside of the Philippine ostrich industry's future."

The trade began as an outreach program of former Senator Juan Ponce Enrile to Mindanao rebel returnees set up in Mindanao and Nueva Ecija to supply for sign members.

Desmarets said they formed the foundation initially to capitalize on the export market, but its members, who all hail from the Cordillera, realized its domestic potential, he said.

Ostrich meat tastes like beef and has less calories than most cattle byproducts, he said.

Desmarets said ostrich meat can be a beef alternative, particularly for communities in the Cordillera. Upland villagers have more heavy diet that requires a supply that must sometimes be imported from the lowlands because the mountain terrain is too restrictive for cattle rearing.

Ostrich farms require only a few hundred square meters.

Desmarets petitioned the BA by establishing the ostrich meat's competitive values.

Mancao responded when the bureau acted his appeal. "While it is true that ostrich meat is not covered by government regulations, please be assured that government has not been remiss of its duty to safeguard the health of meat consuming public from risks related to emerging zoonotic," the wrote Desmarets.

Desmarets said the foundation is documenting the progress of its farms and is scientifically tracking each ostrich chick's progress. "So far, not a single chick has caught any locally derived diseases," he said. Howard Cabrera, PDI Northern Luzon Bureau

Cult violates Banahaw rules; 14 members held

LUCENA CITY—Police arrested 14 cult members for illegally building structures on Mt. Banahaw, a protected area.

The arrested cult members were identified as Bienvenido Sombero, Pedro Perilla, Amadeo Pia, Crisanto Mina, Clemente Pantoja, Nali Andal, Antonio Comia, Cesar Andal, Eugenio Pedro, Josephine Ilokza, Consolacion Fadon, Esther Pineda, Samuel de la Torre and Nick Sarmiento.

They are members of the Banahaw-based cult Supremo de la Iglesia de la Ciudad Mística de Dios (Mistica) based in Barangay Sta. Lucia in Dolores, Quezon.

Sally Pangan, park area superviser of the Mt. Banahaw-San Cristobal Protected Landscape Area, filed a complaint at the municipal trial court of Dolores accusing the 14 of violating the National Integrated Protected Areas Systems Act of 1992 or Nipas.

Video

Based on a video documentation made by Ay Lim, community coordinator of Tanggol Kalikasan-Southern Luzon, an environmental legal defense union, government authorities caught the suspects while in the act of putting up the cult demand posters of a massive structure in the sacred area of Kabesilla ng Ina (Arms Encircled by the Father), one of the cult's sprines in the mountain.

"It seemed that they still acted as the owners of the structures because they were stopped working on it despite the fact that it was no longer under their control," Lim said.

Sacks of sand, aggregates, bags of cement, steel bars and piles of lupala roofing materials were scattered around the construction site.

Lim said the construction materials were hauled atop the mountain one with the use of ropes and pulleys.

As the police arrests, Isabel Soares, the recognized leader of Mistica and referred to by its members as "Supremo," admitted responsibility for the construction work.

She appealed to Sup. Bernardo Reyes II, Dolores police station chief, to release the suspects under her custody but the police denied the request.

Bail

It was learned that several hours later, all the cult members were released after posting ₱6,000 bail each.

In 1998, Mistica constructed the concrete building, which according to the religious sect, would serve as a convention center, place and restroom for all invasion pilgrims.

But the Department of Environment and Natural Resources ordered the religious cult to stop the construction. Belyn Mallari Jr., PDI Southern Luzon Bureau

Casino men protest stop to cash meal allowances

ANGELES CITY—Some 500 employees of the Philippine Amusement and Gaming Corp.'s (Pagcor) Casino Filipino branches in Angeles and Olongapo cities and Subic Bay Freeport have set liens putting their P90 daily meal allowance in cash since June.

Food coins, though, through a catering company owned by former Pampanga provincial board member Edgardo Pono, complaining employees said the business.

The meal allowance used to come in cash. It was recently increased from P60 to P90 but instead of getting the full amount, the employees said they were provided with meals during duty.

Those assigned to the Casino Filipino Mimosa branch in Clark would have the same scheme starting July 11, it was learned.

The employees said they would rather have their meal allowances in cash so they could set aside some savings. They said they submitted a letter urging a return to the previous scheme but the Pagcor management, they added, refused and reassigned their leaders to other branches.

According to them, Pono got the catering contract because his daughter works as a secretary in Pagcor Clark-Sphinxian Complex.

Pono also used to be president of the Pinduhan Kusot, the cacchal unit as a provincial board member.

Pono could not be reached for comment. His mobile phone was outside of the coverage area and his phone in Clark was busy during the time that the business camp his numbers. He did not reply to text messages.

Rick Gloria, manager of the Casino Filipino-Los Angeles, confirmed that the employees were receiving their meal allowance in kind. He said this has been the policy of Pagcor and that this was for the convenience of the employees. Rosetta Orejas, PDI Central Luzon Desk

Livelihood execs fear job stats to include vendors

BACOLOD CITY—President Macapagal-Arroyo's promise of generating basic six to 10 million more jobs during her six-year term will have the government's "employment statistics reflect employed workers, according to officials of the 1000-million National Livelihood Support Fund (NLSF).

In a press conference last week, Asuncion Dario, NLSF chief operating officer, said the public interpreted the President's statement to mean the creation of actual jobs.

But Dario said the Arroyo's agenda should also include the job opportunities which her policies and programs would help open in micro-to-top-enterprises. Business ventures that require only ₱5,000 to ₱20,000 in capital investment.

Dario, however, did not explain how the government would justify including in Mr. Arroyo's accomplishments report all self-employed people like vendors of cigarettes, ales or fish balls. The people may not be able to account their small ventures beyond six months.

NFSL, who was in Iloilo to help launch Accord Bank's Community Business Development Center, said micro-entrepreneurs compose the largest volume of businesses, which could help the Arroyo achieve her poverty alleviation target.

An Inquirer report on June 30 estimated that the President would need to generate 2,740 jobs every day for the next six years to complete her 10-million job target.

Bienvenido Tria, an NLSF governance consultant, said over a billion micro-entrepreneurs had access to NLSF loans in the past two years.

He knows had promised to generate a million new jobs during that period. Vincent Cabreza, PDI Northern Luzon Bureau

Erap put under 'rest house' arrest

(continued on A-1)

be brought back to Camp Capinpin or to the AFMC (Armed Forces Medical Center) in the event more would surface," the court said.

Associate Justices Jerome J. Leonardo de Castro, Roland B. Arnaldo and Teresita Dizon Rabdas concurred with the decision penned by Regalado. Associate Justice Edilberto G. Sandoval dissented.

No ordinary prisoner

"Estrada is not like any other prisoners" the ruling said. "He was once in command. He is a former President whose continuing influence and clout (the court) takes note of. ... Other fitting bounds of state involvement must be set to prevent Estrada from influencing the peace and order situation in this country, among other things."

The prosecution had opposed Estrada's request, saying his detention at his rest house was "beset with no dispute" in view of the Constitution's equal protection clause.

According to the court, however, there was a distinction between common prisoners and detainees, like Estrada, who were still presumed innocent and had not forfeited their political rights. It said there was no hard-and-fast rule when it came to medical arrangements involving detainees like Estrada.

Besides, the court said, keeping Estrada in his rest house would preclude new demonstrations considering the expense needed to bring his supporters to Tanay. The court added that Estrada's recent statements "belie any attempt on his (his) part to flee."

The order was to take effect in three days during which Estrada must agree to the conditions set by the court.

• Estrada must "surrender custody and supervision" of his person to the Philippine National Police.

• He will "not promote, provoke or compose ... any form of public disturbance."

• The PNP will exert control and supervision over all his visitors.

• All communication gadgets are to be barred from the rest house, including all kinds of media interviews.

• His movements are to be limited to the rest house, chapel and gardens.

If any of these conditions are violated, the court may order Estrada's return to Camp Capinpin or the Veterans Memorial Medical Center in Quezon City.

Reacting to the resolution, Special Prosecutor Dennis Villa-Ignacio said the court ruling allowed Estrada to live in luxury while in detention.

"I don't find any reason for this complete reinstatement," he said, noting that the court had twice increased Estrada's motion for house arrest.

Day of rules

In an earlier ruling, the court said it was legal for Estrada to use the "Jose Velarde" alias in opening a bank account, but not legal for him to hide the existence of the bank account where he allegedly stashed billions of pesos in ill-gotten wealth.

Even so, the dismissal of the case involving the illegal use of an alias still left Estrada saddled with two more cases—plunder and perjury.

In a 15-page resolution, the court said that assuming Estrada proved that "use of aliases is sanctioned by law, there was no showing that he complied with the requirements of the law in using the alias 'Jose Velarde' in opening the bank account."

The court said Estrada failed to disclose his bank account to the Bureau of Internal Revenue (BIR) and to declare the deposits in his statement of assets, liabilities and net worth (SALN).

"Estrada's failure to disclose his bank account to the BIR and to declare the deposits in his SALN are clear violations of the law," the court said.

The court said Estrada's claim that he was not required to disclose his bank account because of the confidentiality clause in Republic Act No. 1405, otherwise known as the Secrecy of Bank Deposits Act, refers to signed bank documents using the alias "Jose Velarde" like an RCBL (Rizal Commercial Banking Corp.) check dated Oct. 4, 2000, in favor of Equitable PCI Bank executive vice president Clarissa Ocampo, the prosecution's star witness, in Mandaluyong.

The Anti-Money Laundering Law (RA 9160), which prohibits the use of aliases in opening bank accounts, took effect on October 2001.

"A reasonable scrutiny of the laws is applied to the present case law, considering and the court is to conclude that the use of an alias within the context of a bank transaction is protected by the secrecy provisions of RA 1405, until the passage into law of RA 9160," the court said.

On the prosecution's argument that the use of alias was prohibited under Commonwealth Act No. 142, the court said the prohibition of the old law would not be applied to Estrada because he did not use the Jose Velarde alias "publicly and indiscriminately."

Villa-Ignacio said the dropping of the case against Estrada was "significant." "But he faces conviction of the charge of illegal use of an alias. Estrada would have been in detention even last month (April)."

Estrada still faces charges of perjury and plunder, a nonbailable offense punishable by death. The trial resumes Aug. 16.

US quiz champion closes in on $1M

(continued on A-1)

money manager, said Jennings, a 38-year-old Web software engineer who will make his unprecedented 29th appearance on the syndicated quiz show on Monday night.

"A lot of it is just God-given memory that I can't take any credit for," he said. "I've always been interested in a lot of different fields. It's not just that I'm a computer engineer and all I care about is computers."

Playing "Jeopardy!" fulfills a longtime dream, although Jennings remembers the cash prize is a bit delayed, too.

"It's enough fun that the money's just a big fat cherry on the cake," he told The Associated Press. "But there seems to be a lot of hype."

There's also an unexpected measure of celebrity. A few "Jeopardy!" champs have sought the public eye—you'll see Ken Jennings' cop friend Frank Spangenberg with his show-record $324,000-plus winnings in 1990—but it's typically old-fashioned game show stuff that's the size.

Jennings' reaction started rising June 2 but changed that, especially as he notched $1 million. On Monday, he's set to appear on ABC's "Good Morning America" and on CBS' "Late Show with David Letterman."

Overlooked

Jennings admits feeling nervous and a bit overwhelmed by the attention.

"I remember the first time I was standing (in) the 'Jeopardy' mansion and" Jennings said. "And clearly looking for my Ken Jennings, I was very surreal. It's a little weird to see get recognized in the grocery store, and Letterman's calling."

But that for a family man who gives a self-deprecating shake of the head when his own mind is announced and whose hobbies pictures is adding a thousand to his name on the player-fit scores.

Jennings is studying the secret of a change in "Jeopardy!" rules. Enacted the start of its 20th season last September, the only show lifted its five-game limit for winners and allowed them to keep going until they lose.

On the show, which is taped in advance and usually airs about a month or two after one day of production, players are given answers in a wide variety of categories and must quickly buzz in to give the correct question.

"I admire the heck out of this guy," said Bob Harris of Los Angeles, a "Jeopardy!" four-time champion who competed before the rule change. "To run that gamut straight any day is mentally exhausting, and he does it flawlessly, with a big smile on his face."

"If he lying if I said there wasn't a certain degree of envy," added Harris, a political writer who makes $75 an hour.

Previous record-holder Tom Nissley, 39, of Washington, D.C., managed a seven-day run with $264,000 in winnings on the show in January.

A Seattle native who grew up in South Korea—his father works for an international law firm in Seoul—Jennings watched "Jeopardy!" on the US Armed Forces TV network and thought to himself: "Hey, maybe you could go on 'Jeopardy!' You'd never built before it."

Feeling

After years of toying with the idea, he finally got "fed up with being really wealthy" and made a mad trip to Los Angeles to audition. When he was invited to the show, Jennings took family practicing things.

A member of Brigham Young University's College Bowl team in the 1980s, Jennings notes a) makes Rensburg questions for the National academic Quiz Tournament.

He credits his fast mental recall, knowing full well how tough the "Jeopardy!" competition can be.

"My expectations were similar to get a few answers, to show I wasn't a total disaster, so once (I) was getting shut out on the buzzer I still thought like I'd won a thing or two," he said. "And I would have been happy with that."

He loves movies—he was an English literature major in college—and general knowledge with the world have served him well on "Jeopardy!" AP

Cop's arrogance nearly spoils crime probe

By Carmen B. Bitoy

ROY PETRONIO next a grim seal after he was shot by an unidentified man who made sure he was dead by stabbing him in the back after a brief chase outside the Inquirer printing press in Makati City on Sunday. KEN GONZALES

EVER wonder why some crimes never get solved?

This story could provide a clue.

At about 7:30 p.m. on Sunday, Makati City resident Roy Petronio had a fight with an unidentified man along Yupor Street, in Barangay Bgy. Rizal.

After throwing punches at each other, Petronio's foe fled when he drew out a knife.

Petronio, who used to work as a warehouse tenant by the Inquirer, followed the man, stayed behind and began to drown a bottle of gin, according to witnesses.

Thirty minutes later, a shot rang out.

Residents of a depressed community where Petronio used to hang out to drink said his foe had returned, armed with a handgun.

Petronio sought refuge at the Dispatching Area of PEP Printing Corporation, printer of the Philippine Daily Inquirer and its sister papers Tempo and Banderas.

There, he jumped into a parked delivery truck before entering the platform where about 20 workers, truck drivers and their helpers were stuffing up newly printed newspapers for delivery.

But Petronio's opponent was right on his trail.

Printing press employees Roy Rabadon said Petronio ran to the parking area, where he tried to hack his foe with his bolo, but was hit by a bullet from his opponent's gun, a homemade .38-caliber revolver.

Before stunned bystanders, Petronio fell face down a building that stood object with a pointed tip, and stabbed his enemy.

Sr. insp. Alejandro Alamayo then arrived at 9:15 p.m. but was not able to get enough information from printing press watchman Reynaldo Gutierrez, who said he was late for home when the incident took place to give relevant data.

However, PO2 Renato de Guzman, who was with Alamayo, separately pulled at Imbano "but you blocked my way, talking to our chief and you couldn't give any information!"

"Triple long 'yan. (That's his style!)," Alamayo said.

Before De Guzman left, the investigator asked him, "Sir, are you handling the investigation of this case?"

"No," he answered.

As it turned out, De Guzman was not an authorized investigator but Alamayo's security escort.

Witnesses told the Inquirer that had De Guzman been the investigator, they would have performed a test to find if there was any residue of gunpowder from powder burns on Petronio's hands.

Fortunately, PO2 Ilio Tolentino, an investigator from the Criminal Investigation Division of the Makati police, arrived at about 9:30 p.m. Through diligence and subtle persuasion, he managed to convince witnesses to cooperate in the investigation.

Otherwise, as thanks to De Guzman, the investigation on the killing would have probably ended up nowhere.

TRB orders SLEX rates rolled back

By Clarissa S. Batino

FOOD news for southbound motorists using the expressway.

The Subsey Regulatory Board yesterday ordered the Philippine National Construction Corp. to roll back the toll rate by 20 centavos per kilometer along the South Luzon Expressway or SLEX.

Uniform rate

Effective today, the toll will be a uniform rate of 52 centavos per kilometer for both the SLEX and the Star Tollway Expressway or STEX for cars and jeeps. The new rate is still higher than the 49-centavos per km. rate approved by the TRB in 2001.

The new toll rate means a P10 increase for the entire stretch of both highways for cars and jeeps, P30 for light trucks and vans, and P45 for heavy trucks, according to Transport Undersecretary Isaac Valdes.

The PNCC had asked motorists to pay 72 centavos per kilometer using the SLEX and 52 centavos per kilometer along the SLEX starting July 1, from only 33 centavos per kilometer. The corporation operates the SLEX that runs from Nichols to Alabang and the SLEX that spans Balintawak to Sta. Ana in Pampanga.

'Work together'

But the TRB said the PNCC unreasonably imposed a new toll last week. The Transportation Department then ordered the two agencies to work together and come up with the correct toll rate.

In the end, the TRB gave in to the 52 centavos per kilometer rate that the PNCC had already implemented for the SLEX.

Refunds

Valdes said motorists who kept their receipts can file an refunds from the SLEX. "But for those who failed to keep these, the refundable amount will be held in escrow by the TRB," he added.

The transport official said the TRB could have asked the PNCC to reduce the toll rate along the SLEX to 49 centavos per kilometer.

"We took cognizance of PNCC's position that it was supposed to implement a 20-centavo increase in Jan. 10, 2001, but the TRB stopped the PNCC from doing so. Based on our computations, a 52-centavo increase is reasonable, given the development at the SLEX," said Valdes, who represents the transportation department on the TRB.

Valdes said the 52-centavo per kilometer rate was computed using a 12 percent return on rate base formula applied on the PNCC's asset appraisal.

Maintenance costs

He said that Section 9 of Presidential Decree 1894 provides that the PNCC "shall deposit in an escrow account the excess amount collected under the adjustments and such amount shall be refunded to the [motorists] who paid the toll adjustment in accordance with the procedure as may be prescribed by the TRB."

PNCC chair Pastor Ramos last week said the toll operator, mired in billions of pesos in debt, could no longer shoulder the increasing cost of maintaining the south and North Expressways.

New traffic ticketing system set

By Margaux C. Ortiz

A HDN ticketing system for traffic violators will be implemented by the Metropolitan Manila Development Authority on Thursday.

MMDA Traffic Operations Center Director Angelito Brigol de Dios said under the new system, an erring motorist would be issued a Metropolitan Traffic Ticket (MTT), but his driver's license would no longer be confiscated.

The motorist could then pay his fines to a nearby Metrobank branch instead of lining up at an MMDA redemption center to reclaim his license, he said.

The "one-stop system would also eliminate bribery and corruption between the traffic enforcer and motorists, he added.

Within seven days

The traffic chief stressed that the motorist has to pay his fines within seven days, or face additional surcharges.

A motorists who fails to settle his penalties after three years would not be able to renew his driver's license, he added.

Brigol de Dios, however, said that strikes and demonstrations implementing their cost-traffic code would initially create confusion among drivers.

Makati City, for example, has had its traffic code and its new ordinance violation receipt that it will implement on July 15.

Mandaluyong chorus 2nd best in music fest

By Lojo del Puerto

THERE'S a new group of young Filipinos who recently did the country proud by singing their way to international fame.

The Mandaluyong Children's Chorus (MCC) won the second prize in the youth category of the International Choral Eisteddfod 2004, a music competition and festival held in Llangollen, British Columbia, Canada.

It is an amazing feat for a singing group whose average age is only 13.

Recent columnist Sarah Trinidad, whose son Sebastian is the choir's founding music director, received the good news this week.

"They placed second to a group from Russia, which is considered a triad of the Mariinsky Singers," Trinidad said.

The Philippine Madrigal Singers is acknowledged as the best choral group in the country today.

Astounding

While the children triumphed in the category for mixed choir of adults, what is even more astounding is that most of them come from poor families—a testament that poverty does not prevent true talent.

Over the past two decades, Kidlat-author Quezonnessed the choirs moves has observed more than 10 choirs from all over the world in each festival, which is held every summer in Powell River. This year, the organizers invited only 35 choral groups, all of which were rightly screened.

The MCC children's choir had earlier won cages of their performances, and got the nod.

Trinidad said the children were given two standing ovations by the crowd when they held a concert in the Canadian town.

It was a fairytale ending to a story that was almost nipped in the bud.

Financial problems

Last week, the children almost never made it to the airport after money promised to them did not come on time.

The children were able to leave after a timely jobs on television, but arrived late for the competition.

As a result, the children failed to join the contemporary music category, Trinidad said.

The MCC, a elementary choir of the UP College of Music, is at its best when singing contemporary Filipino music.

For years ago in Busan, South Korea, the choir won the silver and bronze trophies from the prestigious II World Choir Olympics.

The children were the first Filipinos to reach a silver finish in the children's choir and the mixed choir in the musical competition.

UHSM Batch '79 reunion July 16

THE PUBLIFTIS Christian University-Union High School of Manila Batch 1979 is holding a reunion dinner (play) on Friday, July 16, at the Union Country Club, Alabang, Muntinlupa City.

The year of 25 reminiscences of 25 years of memories, there will be several programs before the main event. These include a ladies' and men's day out, a jazz night, a sports day, and a post-reunion getaway.

For details, contact Debbie Villacin (telephone 0 545 4200 or 0917 811 8279).

2 'fun houses' closed

By Tina Santos

NO FUN time for now.

Are not paying business taxes amounting to more than P1 million and operating without the necessary permits, two "fun houses" in Quezon City were closed yesterday by Metro Inflation Enforcement.

Balloched were Le Legends RTV located on Quezon Avenue corner Araneta Avenue and reportedly owned by Cynthia Regondo Gutierrez-Duh and Restaurant located on Timog Avenue, said to belong to Ludivina Avaloz.

Only workers of the two establishments were around when local government officials led by City Treasurer Victor Endaya and police operatives issued the closure order before noon yesterday.

Endaya said Le Legends owes the city government more than P2.6 million in back taxes since 2000 until the present, while Levian has P2.4 million in tax arrears to the same period.

The establishments had failed to settle its financial obligations to the city despite repeated demands and notices, he added.

"Triple long 'yan. (That's his style!)," Alamayo said.

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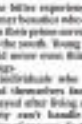
Otherwise, as thanks to De Guzman, the investigation on the killing would have probably ended up nowhere.

Reyes faces big task at DILG



ON TARGET

FLORANTE TOLENTINO

IF TARZAN's anybody in Manny Pacquiao's corner, it's Ronnie Ricketts.

The seven marks above the eyebrow of brigade-duty Cruz, 10 Filipino being held hostage in Iraq, is in fact Secretary Ronnie Ricketts.

It was Sec. Tomas who broke the news that he is true and unscathed by his captors. Iraqi militants had threatened to behead the black driver from Mexico, Hungaria, if the Philippine contingent in Iraq was not withdrawn.

When Sec. Ricketts signed the news of his impending release, they backed off and held him hostage again.

Now, it will be much more difficult to convince these Iraqi militants to release Sec. Ricketts.

* * *

Although it was not President Macapagal-Arroyo's fault that the Iraqi militants changed their minds about releasing our last hapless countryman, she would be blamed for the hostage.

The leader always gets the rap for the mistakes of underlings. Whatpa.

So, the President should choose her cabinet members well.

* * *

Retired Army general Angelo Reyes took over yesterday as secretary of interior and local government, replacing Joey Lina, who has returned to the private sector and accomplished life of a civilian.

Reyes has a big task before him: imposing discipline on an undisciplined police force. So other task is bigger than that.

If he can bring discipline to the Philippine National Police, then he will be able to solve the country's problem of criminality.

A disciplined PNP would win the support of the citizenry in the fight against criminality. Right now, many people sympathize with criminals because they consider police even their enemies instead of allies.

If Reyes can avail of underage in uniform in season, he will be like their fellow Secretary Ronnie Magsaysay who was the hearts of the common people.

Magsaysay solved the unrest and detention of soldiers who abused civilians. In return, the civilians helped Magsaysay fight the insurgent Huks. And because the civilian population no longer sympathized with the Huks, many of the Huklalahs surrendered to Magsaysay.

* * *

Ogie Reyes, entertainment columnist of the tabloid Bandera, this paper's sister publication, tells us yesterday that some former big stars have gone into obscurity. Worse, they've become either ugly or crazy after using drugs.

He mentioned some of them: Sarsi Emmanuel, a sexy star of the '80s, now working as a saleswoman; Josephine Manuel, now a domestic helper; Carmen Rosales, who now lives under a bridge; Brandy Ayala, who has become mentally ill.

May the bitter experiences of these former beautiful ones now be a lesson to their prime stars as a lesson to the youth. Young people should never even think of trying drugs.

Many individuals who accidentally find themselves hooked and annoyed after living a life of poverty can't handle the heady wine of success. To these people, success is an exciting because of the public adulation and the flood of money they want to experience a different kind of excitement.

They try using drugs. And that's when they commit the biggest mistake in their lives.

Not only actors and actresses have made that kind of mistake. Some police men engaged in anti-narcotics units have made the same mistake. They cope their drugs out of curiosity and they become hooked.

People who get hooked on an illegal substance need it because they needed it to taste it. Most of them tried it for the first time and get hooked immediately.

People hooked on drugs need and even kill to they could support their addiction. Many of the street crimes are committed by people addicted to drugs. Many families have suffered or are suffering because one or two of their sons are drug dependents.

Now, let's go back to those stars of yesteryears who have become penniless, ugly and insane, mental patients.

When they were in their prime, they resorted to drugs because they couldn't handle success. They needed a quick fix to control their feelings.

Little did they know that the drugs would control them. After they got hooked, they didn't care about their appearance. What they cared about was to support their habit.

The late movies actor Vic Vargas was an example. He had a drug-related pregnancy in his prime. Whence it removed any his physique and handsome face.

But then, Vargas fell prey to drugs. He became so addicted to shabu he reportedly had to push it in order to have money to support his habit. He was allegedly on the police list of drug pushers.

Another very sexy and beautiful singer in the 1970s also fell prey to drugs. "High" on drugs or already deranged, she was seen going around naked in public a few years ago.

So, to the young people, if you're curious about using drugs, kill that curiosity. Satisfying the curiosity will kill you or destroy your future.

See'eMall!

AT THE CENTER

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ENTERTAINMENT LIVE!

GLORIETTA

MARTIN NIEVERA: Tough Crowd

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ATC	G1	G4	GB3	ACC
1	1	1	1	1
2	2	2	2	2
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	1			
	2			

MAKATI CINEMANILA international film festival

EXTENDED

What makes watching SPIDER-MAN 2 at AYALA CINEMAS' THX so cool?

THX

AYALA CINEMAS

GOLD CARD

Stargazing at Glorietta 1

Meet & Greet the stars of LIBERATED 2

AYALA MALLS

Love'eMall!

ENTERTAINMENT

Gilda Louie C. Carino

Kris cries 'libel!'

"LIBRAH." "I've always believed in fair competition," says Kris. "GMA 7 crossed the line in this instance."

By Ma Isel B. Cruz

"EVERYTHING about it breached the benchmark for libel," lawyer Vigilol Rotta said because Edelweiss.

Rotta was referring to an e-mail that GMA 7 public relations executive Ms. Teresa "Tet" Belmonte reportedly sent some retired writers last week for inclusion in their columns as if it was their own opinion. The column had was filled with negative comments about Aquino, including her love affairs, and her talk show "Good Morning Kris," on ABS-CBN, which is in the same late-morning time slot as GMA 7's "Sis."

A statement signed by GMA Network president Felipe Gozon and EVP Gilberto Duavit, now to become Executive assistant secretary, disowned the network from Belmonte. It said the network was apologizing to Aquino "for whatever inconvenience the item may have caused her."

The statement said "the reported column feed was sent by [Belmonte] on her own. It has never been GMA 7's policy to engage in such acts. It was done without our knowledge, much less our consent."

Still, Aquino yesterday sought P80 million in moral damages as she filed libel charges against Belmonte as well as Gozon, Duavit, corporate relations SVP Sarah Raquel and VP for news, announcer Wilma Galvante.

SIGNED by Aquino, affidavit of complaint is later submitted by lawyer Forteza.

Belmonte refused to comment.

Aquino, through her lawyer, said the column feed painted a picture of her as "promiscuous and a woman of loose morals."

Forteza formally submitted Aquino's affidavit of complaint to the Makati City prosecutor's office at 2:30 p.m.

One of the recipients of the Belmonte e-mail, Jojo Gabinete, published it in full in his "The Source" column in the Abante tabloid last July 9. Gabinete, however, identified its sender and also printed the accompanying note in which Belmonte requested that the item be included in Gabinete's column.

The column feed criticized Aquino for not acting her age and for believing "like a blushing bride-to-be." It also mentioned Aquino's having had HIV, as revealed by Aquino herself during her public breakup with former Batasbayan Mayor Jose Marquez last year, and her affairs with married men. It said Aquino "deserved" the STD.

In her affidavit, Aquino said Belmonte's e-mail "expressly stated that it destroys the dresses ... and implied that I am promiscuous and a woman of loose morals who should not be listened to nor viewed as a host in a morning TV program." The e-mail also referred to "Good Morning, Brit" as "pure commercialism."

Because Entertainment contacted Kris for comment, but she said her lawyer had advised her not to talk about the case.

But a source close to Aquino quoted her as saying, "I've always believed in fair competition. GMA 7 crossed the line in this instance and I'm left with no recourse but to take legal action.'

"What the e-mail did was go beyond fair commenting," said Forteza.

STUDIO 23

Late nights have never been as exciting... She's the lifestyle queen, beauty & wellness guru & your perfect date on Wednesdays nights!

Wednesdays 11:30PM

Life! by Cory Quirino

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TUESDAY, JULY 13, 2004

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

SPORTS

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ADDUCUL

Stags rip Blazers; Altas win in 2 OTs

Coseteng posts PCSO Grand Prix double kill

Hansen's world record swim steals limelight from Phelps

LONG BEACH, California—Brendan Hansen set another world record at the US swim trials on Sunday, stealing some attention away from Michael Phelps.

Hansen won the 200-meter breaststroke with a time of 2 minutes, 9.04 seconds, beating the record of 2:09.42 set by Japan's Kosuke Kitajima at last year's world championships.

On Thursday Hansen broke Kitajima's record in the 100 in breaststroke.

"When I got in this position the first time, I definitely thought something special might happen here," Hansen said.

It did. The 22-year-old native of Havertown, Pennsylvania, became the first American since John Hencken in 1974 to hold the world record at both distances.

In other races, Jason Lezak won the 100-m freestyle and gained the upset berth over rival Gary Hall Jr., who finished third. Hall will connect a trip to Athens on the relays, joining Gary Hall Jr. as the first father-son duo to make three Olympics appearances.

"I feel qualified for my third Olympics and I'm really happy," Hall said. "I'd also like to start contemplating more for team captain."

In another testament to family ties, Dana Vollmer won the 200-m butterfly to join older sister Tara on the US team. They are the male set of siblings to make the same team but the first sisters.

Ed Moses, who was America's dominant breaststroker at the Sydney Games, failed in his bid to return to the Olympics. Bothered by breathing problems, he struggled to a fourth-place showing, more than three seconds behind runner-up Scott Usher, who clinched the expected second spot on the team at 2:10.06.

Hansen, the dominant college breaststroker over the last four years who produced at just the right time, eclipsed Kitajima's 2004 record.

AP

HANSEN en route to winning the 200-meter breaststroke final and earning a new world record of 2:09.04.

CANADIAN OPEN

Mallon on a roll; Rosales 9th

MALLON shows clear winning form in the recent LPGA Open.

NIAGARA FALLS, Ontario—Flew the US Women's Open, and now the Canadian—Meg Mallon is running out of national championships to win this season.

"Well, I've got Nance and Sophinel now!," Mallon said with a chuckle on Sunday referring to the Evian Masters and British Women's Open, the next two events on her schedule.

A week after winning the US Open, Mallon completed her North American double with a super five-, final-round 2-under 70 at Legends on the Niagara battlefield course, finishing at 10-under 277 and shooting the five-place prize of $195,000.

Defending champion Inbee Park finished second, four strokes back, after shooting a final-round 70. Jean Reinhardsen (69) and Lorena Ochoa (70) finished at a tie for third at 279.

Jennifer Rosales, who was fourth last week after collapsing at the 3-hole, second, finished in the finishing holes for a T3 that netted him for sixth place with Gloria Park at 279. The Filipina picked up $27,403 ($1.3 million).

Rosales was well on the way to a top 3 finish by going four under with four holes to go but stumbled with bogeys on the 15th, 17th and 18th. She was two under at the front after a bogey for the eagle can from the fourth and added three birdies on the 12th and 14th before her disastrous finish.

Mallon won her 17th career event and became the first woman to win both US and Canadian titles in the same year. She last 36 under matched a tournament record for lowest score, set by Rosalie Horton in 1998 at Windsor, Ontario.

She also became only the third LPGA Tour champion to win an LPGA event the following week, joining Se Ri Pak, who did it in 1998 and Juli Inkster in 1986. Louise Suggs also won back-to-back events in 1952, but that's when the All American Women's Open was held six months after the US Open.

Mallon has been on a red since shooting a final round 4-under 67 to win her second US Open at Souh Hadley, Massachusetts, last weekend. She's won 28 under in her last six rounds, including five and third rounds in the past week.

With $1.000 million in winnings, Mallon is second to Annika Sorenstam for money list.

AP

SPORTSWATCH

Abapo leaves for Australia fight

THE PHILIPPINES' No. 1 junior lightweight Sani Abapo departs today for Australia for his 12-round fight with Sonny St. Clair on Saturday at the Olympic Park Sports Center, Homebush, New South Wales. Abapo, accompanied by trainer Eddie "Aki" Villamor, is aiming to bring back the WBO Asia Pacific title. The Filipino fighter has had 60 rounds of sparring against WBO welterweight champ Vivo Sandiboi. IBF welter titleist Dindon Sulite. PFP junior welter titlist Glenn Catamento and featherweight contender Cesar Amonsot. The list on game. He owns a 60-10-6 slumber of winning," said Villamor whose other contender's chances against the 36-fight veteran St. Clair (29-0-0, 13 KOs), who is being trained by former world champ Jeff Fenech.

Edwin J. Lapuebla

GAB picks Sultan Boxer of the Month

PHILIPPINE welterweight champ Dondon Sultan has been chosen by the Games and Amusements Board as its boxer of the Month for June following a victory in Australia, recently. The 66.4 kilo-trained Sultan was picked yesterday for the honor and over Australian champion Bernard Eglinton who won 20 with a single exception the eight-round. Oriental and Pacific Boxing Federation president Yumi Saito was one of those who handed option of Sultan's win in Australia, further boosting the Lebanon. Zamboanga native's chances of vying for the OPBF crown. Sultan is rated as the OPBF's mandatory challenger of the 147-lb category which is ruled by compatriot Ken "Bomb Dost" Sandiboi.

Edwin J. Lapuebla

Hensby turns down British Open slot

KOHLER, Illinois—Australian Mark Hensby won the John Deere Classic on Sunday to earn a spot in the British Open, thanks to Stephen Ames' decision to turn down the invitation.

Hensby tapped in for par on the second playoff hole to beat Hensby and claim his first PGA Tour victory.

Ames, who also qualified Monday for the tournament at Royal Troon, said he declined Hensby said he has no experience playing on links courses and wouldn't have enough time to prepare.

The PGA Tour initially announced the spot went to Ohlsen.

Later, a Tour official announced that the spot did go to Morgan.

After speaking with British Open organizers, the Tour was told there is no doubt that allows the winner to pass the spot on to the next highest finisher.

AP

SCHUMACHER

Schumacher gets 10th title

SILVERSTONE, England—Michael Schumacher used a race on his home Sunday to the British Grand Prix. It only lasted for the first 16 laps, but it was a race to remember. Just again, Schumacher was unbeatable, holding off a late-stage challenge from McLaren's Kimi Raikkonen and Juan Pablo Montoya to win his 10th race in 11 this season and the 80th of his career. Raikkonen was 1.1 seconds behind with Montoya another second back. "It's just unbelievable what's happening to me and the team this year," said Schumacher, whose winning time was 1 hour, 24 minutes, 47.770 seconds. His average speed was 215.803 kph (133.726 mph). Schumacher's 10 victories is one short of his own record set in 2002.

AP

San Beda boosters beat Santa Teresa

THE SAN Beda College varsity football squad, bolstered by RP team candidates Jeffrey Limon, Gerald Dumlao and Reggie Mallonzano, downed the varsity of Santa Teresa, 3-0, in a practice game yesterday. After a scoreless first half at the UST Espana pitch, the Lions found Mendoza true control. A 30th minute strike by Ogie Castillo and another in the 75th minute by defender Jun-jun Dan Dimla, the reigning NCAA titlist, this one, him Castillo both RP senior national members, headed the good match played by the two teams. Jun-jun's finished in the same team experiment sanctioned by the Philippine Football Federation.

James tops Senior Players

JAMES

LEARNING, Mississippi—Mark James shot a 1-under 71 and held off Jose Maria Canizares for a one-stroke victory Sunday at the Senior Players Championship. James finished at 13-under 275 and is the first European to win a Champions Tour major. Canizares struggled on the back nine and made double bogey on the 16th. 14 and 17 for 1 under 71, finishing at 12-under 276. Bruce Fleisher (71) finished third at 11-under, and Bruce Lietzke (71) was fourth, another stroke back. Tom Watson (70) and Dave Stockton (71) were fifth at 10-under 278. Of Number James, who captained Europe's 1999 Ryder Cup team at Brookline, became the sixth player to make the Players Championship his first Champions Tour victory. A Ryder Cup player veteran three-time PGA Tour winner at 20 tournaments overseas, James last won at the 1999 Prague Open De Espana. James, 1 century victory finished third at the Senior Players Championship. It's the last month. He also tied for fourth at the Senior PGA Championship in May. James opened with three-strong rounds—a 66 and two 67's—and played just well enough on a hot, muggy afternoon at the TPC at Bellefeuille to win his own US Journey.

AP

Reyes tandem rules Belle Cup Golf

UNOFFICIAL and challenge marked the recent Belle Cup Golf Tournament held in the sprawling resort-themed Tagaytay Highlands and Midlands. The renowned two-ball was led by Philippine Sports Commissioner Ito Rebimbas and Belle Corporation Vice-Chairman Kelly M. Dalisi. The team of Chino Reyes and Carlos Reyes ruled the two-day Belle Cup with a score of 167. They also won the Midlands Cup overall championship with a score of 84. Dalisi will team alongside for the Highlands Cup to the tandem of Sergio Yu and Manuel Uy with 78 points. Event sponsored by Belle Travel Depot, Rx Ace, Sanford Antonio, PSLA Cars, Tiger Beer and William Sports.

LCL Erwin Cambiado 4-cockey today

THE NATIONAL Cockers Association (NCA) says its latest season with the (3) Erwin Cambiado 4-Cock Derby starting at 1 p.m. today at the Araneta Coliseum. It is opening this time that premier gamecocks go into the cocking pit for glaring rivalry champion stags a chance to prove their worth. Some 40 participants are expected to join the journey to give the 2004 NCA season one last hurrah. Wally Alcuaz, Joe Santiago, Ric Vicente, Butch Gonzalez, Noel Rosales, NCA deputy Commissioner Cocker of the Year Pedro Hallach are among the contenders. Organized by Lucio Cua, the derby will serve as a prelude to the NCA Stag Show in September.

Austria rips US

OVERALL leader Thomas Voeckler

NEW YORK—Austria upset the United States in the Fed Cup for the second time in three years, while defending champion Russia, Slovakia and Spain also advanced to the competition's semifinals Sunday.

The Austrians, who also beat the 17-time Fed Cup champions two years ago in the United States, won on just its home ground when Barbara Schwartz, who replaced Lisa Raymond, 7-6 (3), 4-6, 10-8, to lead her team to a 4-1 victory.

French Open champion Anastasia Myskina won her second singles match as Russia topped Argentina, 4-1, while Daniela Hantuchova did the same as Poland's 3 Owns over Italy.

In the other quarterfinal tie, host Spain won all three matches Sunday to close a 2-0 deficit and beat Belgium, 3-2.

AP

Riders lick their wounds

QUIMPER, France—Most for some well-earned R&R—four in Provence.

Battered and bruised both physically and mentally in a crash-filled first week, riders were getting their first day of rest on Monday—a chance to treat wounds, sleep in late and generally recharge for the last mountainous stages ahead.

"It's been a crazy first week. I don't ever remember doing one like that," said five-time champion Lance Armstrong, who's everyone that a crash could end his bid for a record sixth crown.

After Monday's day off, the riders will face a series of more brutal climbs in the Pyrenees and then in the Alps.

Armstrong, who like Boonen's Team Fassbender, who won Sunday's title for the stage through Brittany to reenter France, will give way in the mountains to more nimble climbers and all-rounders like Armstrong.

AP

Greene to defend Olympic sprint crown

ISCHGENTZL, California—Reigning Olympic champion Maurice Greene surged from behind to win the 100-m final at the United States Olympic Athletics Trials while world record-holder Tim Montgomery will stay home.

Three-time world champion Greene served notice that he will be a threat to defend his title next month in Athens by winning in 9.81 seconds here Sunday with Justin Gatlin second in 9.82 and Shawn Crawford third in 9.93.

"I know it was going to be a tough race. It was going to take something I had," Greene said. "They ran good. I ran good. It's whoever executes the best." Greene closed quickly to the middle of the race to edge rivals at the line.

"My last 60(m) is gone," Greene said.

AFP

Coseteng . . .

From page A17

his comp with a time of 57.18.04s.

Philip Almeida matched that place before and Oeg scored his first board lift.

Campos displayed new perfect driving in the finishing race of the Formula Toyota event, beating Adam Formella Jr. driver Mike Toronto and Chief player Michelle Rodriguez of Standard Insurance.

Toronto called the afternoon action when Campos pushed his car too far and spun out.

Jay Reyes, Miguel Lazaro and Kenneth Morales also triumphed.

Reyes topped the first race of the National Junior Touring Car Class B division, Lazaro beat Jady Jerez Dalida Gutierrez in the first race of the National Junior Touring Car Championship and Morales dominated the second NJTC race.

FELIX CUP WINNER. Friend mare Dundonnell gallops to a runaway victory in the Gawad ni Felix Cup at the Santa Ana Park. Inset are her owner Joseph Dyhengco (center), British Embassy official Robert Fleckoe (right) and Philracom commissioner Eduardo Joa during the awarding ceremony.

BUSINESS

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Data stock market report on Page B3.

Stocks end lower

STOCKS led by PLDT yesterday ended lower in subdued trade as many investors stayed out the sidelines awaiting the release of second-quarter corporate earnings.

"There was no positive news to support from [illegible]," said AB Capital secu-

REVENUE-GENERATING MEASURE

Gov't agencies plan to raise fees

By Michelle V. Remo

THE NATIONAL government is expected to order various government agencies and state-owned firms to raise the service fees and other charges they collect from the public.

The move is seen to generate P1.7 billion in additional revenue a year for the cash-strapped government, according to Department of Finance officials.

The Department of Foreign Affairs (DFA), Land Transportation Authority (LTA), Department of Agriculture (DA), Air Transportation Office (ATO), and the Bureau of Customs (BOC), are some of the state's biggest revenue earners and are among the agencies expected to raise their fees.

According to a DOF official, the estimated P1.7 billion in additional revenue will be based on the government agencies' proposed increase in fees and charges.

BOC, for example, is expected to raise the fees imposed on the release of importation license while the LTA will hike the fees for the transfer of land titles. The ATO may even collect higher fees for the parking of airplanes, while the DFA may raise the rates for passport issuances.

"The amount of increase will be based on each of the government agency's full cost recovery," said a finance official. This means the hike in rates will be commensurate with the additional expenses to be incurred by government agencies and government-owned and -controlled corporations (GOCCs) in rendering the services due to higher administrative cost.

The official, however, declined to say how much increase will be implemented, adding that the amounts may vary from one government agency to another.

The last time the government implemented an increase in fees and charges was in January 2000, or during the time of former President Joseph Estrada. Estrada ordered all government agencies

(CONT'D ON

For whom the bill is toll

Conrado R. Bautista III

AND like he follows and wrangles Trade and Industry Secretary Cesar Purisima rules, although he is not a bachelor, is setting up the Philippine Infrastructure Corp., 1 can see us owning P200 billion.

I can spend the money on fundamental activities like buying myself a mansion here and there, and a few sports cars for mobility, allot enough I need for a family trust.

On the other hand, the former HSY loser Purisima, who gave up his lucrative job to join the government, with only six months to go before Gloria Macapagal's ends, but privately envy-ted, administration of Mendoza was to expire, wants to retain the money on hands.

Purisima needs some P200 billion to build roads and such, or what he calls 10 "major" infrastructure projects, all bound to move south of Metro Manila.

I suppose something about the equation "EO" makes Purisima's plans irresistible. The bold Time I checked, this country needed 2,000 infrastructure projects. And to be a nation, the international community insisting it to be up and running by next month.

Since I need the power of one time to give the new infrastructure company a catchy nickname, but I have a feeling it will most likely be PIIC.

PIIC, to me, is a good example of the "bold" stroke, eric me, MOVES, which an IMF guy suggested that this administration of Gloriastris need. Like right now. It is a free country is on the upland of more. I like this Purisima character.

Anyway, the biggest problem of this local administration of course is money. It is broke. Not only that, it is also dead broke. To correct you, able build the new infrastructure which I am sure you remember only about half a century ago.

For people to move goods in and around Metro Manila—which is even the most developed part of the country, at that—they have to expand to lots of blood, sweat and tears—literally. I am not kidding. The history read. It's really makes people cry.

You see, the last time we did what Purisima calls "major" road projects, the Japan-administration, both the North and the South, was sometime in the 1960s, or more than 40 years ago, which is already several lifetimes for dogs.

LUCKILY in the past 40 years, we failed to maintain the only respectable one we had—a country which deserved and supposed to be the pearl of the orient—the highroads.

It used to be like going to hell, and then back, to drive on the NLEX. In the early morning rush hours, just going from Balintawak to Meycauayan would take a stretch of less than 10 kilometers, need to take only about two hours. Believe me, I have cousins living in Meycauayan, working elsewhere in Manila.

But that was the time I used to live in only if you were lucky. If you were a bit unlucky, you could spend the night, trapped inside the expressway—food, hunger and sleep.

And to think, a lot of people lived far to the north, as in Bulacan, and then commuter everyday to their work in Metro Manila. How many times, do you think, were there commuter? Hint...they could already grow a beard.

Still hmm, my friends, because in a couple of months, the rehab of the NLEX will be completed by Manila North Tollways Corp., or MNTC, a fellow this hoping group.

Yesterday with a small portion of the road still under reconstruction, I took the expressway to pay my fare expects to account rules passed away in our home province, Bacolod-city Pilot, and Medellin at the Cebu-Iloilo MNTC Expressway.

And I thought to myself that, if only the expressway are main, named properly, perhaps Conrad Lanza, which includes my home province where everybody is a Governor's Inc., could have also an as well, if not better, than the one called Calabarzon.

I also had up on the economics of building good roads, and indeed, by the UP Planning Development and Studies. Researchers was rather enlightening.

For every kilometer of paved road, the study concluded, the economy can create about P20 million income more over time. As simple of example is that every time the road is kept in good working order it's a maintenance gains.

NOW the NLEX serves a daily target area, covering three huge provinces, Pampanga, Bulacan and Pangasinan, and the number can go to infinity and by trains.

It used to be, before the MNTC came in, the maintenance of NLEX was done by using dozens of elevating guns to fix the cracks and just holes.

Anyway, economists say that bad roads also mean higher costs of doing business. They were even able to quantify the additional costs of bad roads.

For instance, with the reconstruction of the NLEX, it took just some up to an more than P400 for every trip in maintenance cost, fuel cost, and all the costs of long term of time due to bad traffic.

TOLLROADS like the NLEX and the SLEX, and those 10 major projects of Purisima, are not only necessary.

We already decided during the Spanish time that we needed them roads. But we did, do not, and still not have the money to build them.

I guess that Purisima is on the right track. It's what they do overseas to be countries such as those Europe, plus Japan and the United States, and even China and Korea.

They build tollways. They make people pay for using the expensive but efficient expressways.

The idea is to make the user pay. Create as much of it, why should the non-users, taxpayers, who chronically live far away from roads ever see have in Metro Manila?

For that matter, why should not be such idea can afford to go to Baguio City every now and then, use the road for free?

In this country, the government paradox-something, including politics, with the rules related automatically defines those wage-earners based on their gross income.

Those who earn more always pay more. Those who earn less pay less. Like the users of the road, not all the salaried taxpayers. Make them pay for it the tough talk. Tollroads are used no matter the distance.

SIR, I am even willing to pay P900, P400, P500 by the use of the SLEX, if only to keep the expressway well maintained and, hey, safe for my family.

Believe me, bad roads can kill.

The study by the UP researchers also showed that, for every thousand of the hundreds of thousands of road accidents in the country, about 40 or more were due to bad roads.

Imagine that! And so in this country, only one out of a thousand accidents do we have to worry about kidnappers and syllphonic bandits, so we must also look out for killer potholes. And they are everywhere!

Now about our idea on up a corporate City and Bonifacio, maybe we call it the Philippine Road Patch-up System, or (Hoho) then, it's just an idea!

RP seen out of FATF list in '05

By Michelle V. Rosca

THE PHILIPPINES is expecting to be finally removed next year from the Financial Action Task Force's list of countries deemed not cooperating with the international community's anti-money laundering efforts, said the Anti-Money Laundering Council (AMLC).

According to AMLC Executive Director Yvonne Aquino, the Philippines is already in the third and final stage of getting removed from the list, after completing progress and assessors that the Paris-based watchdog FATF required in declaring a country compliant to anti-money laundering standards.

Aquino said the FATF sent a letter to the AMLC, recognizing the country's progress in addressing reforms that would curb anti-money laundering activities here.

"In this letter, FATF president Guy Sergent advised to the Philippines the heartening news that the FATF was encouraged by the developments in the Philippines' anti-money laundering regime... We may expect to be delisted next year," Aquino told reporters.

Aquino said the main concern cited by FATF for placing the Philippines in the list of non-cooperative countries had already been addressed. The reasons included the absence of no criminal money laundering law, inadequate system for suspicious bank accounts and know-your-client requirements by banks, and the "excessive" bank secrecy law.

Aquino said that since the Philippines had already accomplished all of these, the AMLC would write the FATF to clarify whether it will be removed from the country attended to recommend to finally get out of the blacklist.

Aquino said one reason requirement raised by the FATF is to enact further amendments to the country's anti-money laundering law. The law was passed in 2001 and initial amendments were made in 2003.

Korean bank sees 33% profit growth

By Elizabeth L. Sanchez

COMMERCIAL bank Korea Exchange Bank in Manila is bullish about its business prospects in the Philippines saying it expects to grow as net profit by at least 33 percent this year.

KEB Manila general manager Hong Kwon Jun said the company had projected its earnings to grow to $2.3 million this year from $1.7 million last year.

Jun said last year's earnings were driven by the company's remittance business and commissions from foreign exchange transactions and trade financing.

To further boost business in the Philippines, Jun said he would try to convince more Koreans to invest in the country.

"We have 7,000 Koreans in Korea. We can use those banks as some kind of network to build relationships," Jun said.

In the first half, KEB Manila said it already earned roughly $1.3 million. The company's assets also grew to $240 million from $130 million last year.

Total loans generated for rest was at around $94 million. The bank expects to grow its corporate lending business to $95 million this year.

KEB Manila has roughly 1,000 Korean clients. They're on about 30,000 Koreans who reside in the Philippines.

KEB operates one representative office in Manila.

INITIAL STEP

Shares swap brings Smart interest in Piltel to 32.7%

By Clarissa S. Batino

SMART Communications Inc. says some 32.7 percent of Philippine Telephone Corp. after the Ramos-engaged yesterday 4.03 million non-voting preferred Piltel shares in exchange common shares.

The shares swapped for common shares formed part of the 93.1 million non-voting convertible preferred shares which Smart subscribe to from Philippine Long Distance Co. for P1,864 billion. The Series C block is equivalent to about 47 percent of Piltel.

Each Piltel preferred share is converted into 1.176 million shares, effectively allowing Smart to buy the Piltel shares from PLDT at $0.89 conversion each.

Yesterday's initial conversion gave Smart a 32.7 percent stake in Piltel and diluted PLDT's ownership to 30.5 percent.

Piltel common shares closed higher at P1.50 from P1.32 last Friday. The PSE temporarily stopped the trading of Piltel shares in line with a Philippine Stock Exchange policy requiring a trading suspension following the issuance of shares equivalent to more than 10 percent of a company's capital.

Smart president Napoleon Nazareno said that within the year, the country's largest mobile phone company would own about 40 percent of Piltel.

"Piltel issues will end up with 45 percent and the entire equity issue is not to be completed. PLDT will increase its stake to 47 percent. Combined, the group would have 92.1 percent," Nazareno explained.

Smart said it would convert the remaining 34.3 million Series E convertible preferred shares into Piltel common shares once shareholders have utilized an increase in Piltel's Authorized capital to P2.8 billion from the current P1.5 billion.

The Series E convertible preferred shares are equivalent to 10.06 billion common shares.

Nearly takeover of Piltel from PLDT followed the buyout of 69.4 percent of Piltel's outstanding debt worth $359.5 billion.

"Smart intends to acquire the 1747 million of common shares held by PLDT in Piltel, thereby consolidating its position holdings," said Smart in a statement.

The balance of 54,466 million Series E preferred shares will be converted into common shares after Piltel had increased its authorized capital. The blue is authorized capital will have to be ratified by stockholders on Sept. 3. Only then can the company create more common shares to give the way for the conversion of preferred shares.

Gov't agencies . . .

Front page B1

and GOCCs to implement a minimum 10 percent increase in their fees and charges.

Should Ms Arroyo implement the planned increase, she could do it by issuing an administrative order or a memorandum circular. There will be no need for legislation, said the DOF source.

The increase in public fees and charges is part of the revenue-enhancement measures which President Macapagal-Arroyo's economic team proposed for her six-year term.

The President met with the economic team yesterday to discuss the revenue measures, which include the shift to gross income tax system, the imposition of franchise tax on telecommunications firms, and the 12 percent increase tax on alcohol and cigarettes.

In 2003, the government generated P222.97 billion from taxes and charges. This year, the government hopes to collect P253.5 billion. Should the measure be implemented this year, the 2004 collection is expected to reach P50.2 billion.

Government needs to generate an estimated additional revenue of P50 to P100 billion every year if it hopes to wipe out the huge budget deficit of P197.8 billion by 2009.

Stocks

Front page B1

...ecurity analyst Ivan Ya...lan. "There are very few bargains left. Many are just waiting for second-quarter earnings releases and are beginning to reinvest especially...bilities."

Philippine Long Distance Telephone Co. (PLDT), the country's largest phone firm, declined P5 or 0.40 per cent lower at P1,220. It was the session's most active counter and accounted for 24 percent of total trade.

PLDT is scheduled to announce its second quarter results on Aug. 3.

Globe Telecom Inc., the country's second largest phone firm, also dipped 1% to P820.

The main index closed 0.21 points or 0.09 percent lower at 1,166.20. Turnover fell to P642.70 million from Friday's P992.34 million, as losers outnumbered gainers 81 to 69. — Reuters

PSBank

Peso Time Deposits

Deposit Amount (in pesos)	Term / Current Interest Rates (%)				
	30-60 days	61-90 days	91-180 days	181-364 days	1 year
100,000 - 299,999	4.50	4.75	5.00	5.00	6.25
300,000 - 499,999	4.75	5.25	5.25	5.50	6.75
500,000 - 999,999	5.25	5.75	6.00	6.00	7.25
1.0MM - 4,999,999	7.00	7.25	7.25	7.25	7.75
5 million and up	7.25	7.50	7.75	8.00	8.25

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"The AIM Marketing Strategy Course was 11 days of first class benchmarking with Asia's best marketing & management gurus. It gave me new insights and confidence on how I can continually challenge myself to pursue excellence in my career as a marketer and manager."
Ronald L. Asuncion
Manager, Marketing Services
Sr. Asian Corporation, Inc., Las Piñas, Philippines

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Program Overview

The Marketing Strategy Course (MSC) is for marketing executives who want to upgrade their strategic marketing competencies and senior executives in non-marketing positions who need to know the essence of marketing strategy. It is an intensive program covering the latest and most creative developments in marketing strategy. MSC technology radically changing traditional marketing assumptions, the challenges that the modern marketers is how to successfully merge new and old marketing concepts. This course positions the modern marketer to break through the challenges of globalization and the new competitors, e-business and the dramatic improvements in customer convenience and instant information, flexible production technology and the platforms of new products that it creates, and brand management in the face of market fragmentation.

Distinguished Faculty

Prof. Jose M. Fabella, Program Director, Marketing and process consultancy in the fields of marketing management, strategic planning and formulation, and organization behavior and development. The 1997 Agency Awardee for Excellence in Marketing Education from the Philippine Marketing Association, he was also a visiting professor at the Leiden University School of Management in Netherlands and IPAG in Cologne, Germany. Prof. Fabella holds a Master in Business Administration from the Harvard Business School and a Master of Arts in Economics from Ashland College.

Recommended for:
Marketing Executives, Senior Executives

Contact: Connie Funk-Zaldo
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Tel. nos.: 892-4011 to 20 loc. 142, 536, 166, 228, 416; Direct Line: 892-2500
E-mail: msc@mail.aim.edu.ph ; contactus@aim-msc01.com

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The Asian Forum on CSR examines the need and value of CSR for companies operating in Asia. What are the drivers of CSR and how should companies and civil society move forward in a rapidly-changing Asia?

Heads of State from the Philippines and Thailand honor the first two Forums in their countries.

Partner, Alliance or Government?
Can CSR be sustained by one without the other?

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YaleGlobal
NTV
Philippine Daily Inquirer
Manila Bulletin
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Philippine Star
Forbes Asia
Business Mirror International
Business Today
Philippine Daily Inquirer
Manila Bulletin
Business World

BUSINESS

A stock with certain growth potential

MUCH HAS of importance has happened in the stock market this week, here or abroad, so I will go on about company instead.

My last recommendation was PCIB at ₱1.80 and allowing for the 20-centavo dividend, anyone who bought it almost doubled their money.

Before that was TEL, which has risen to more than 5-1/2 times my original price of ₱220.

The first was on the basis of a guaranteed 11 percent return; the second purely on the chart.

There were no fundamentals, but the technical indicators suggested minimal downside risk and large potential recovery.

Now I have a similar pattern, connected to the last stock, only this time with compelling fundamentals as well.

The stock is PIAH, which was issued originally at ₱20 and went subsequently to a high of ₱44 before hitting the skids.

After rising from a low of 26 centavos very rapidly, the shares have moved within a narrow range of ₱1.80 to ₱1.86 for the past four months.

Suddenly, just over a week ago, the price surged to ₱2 on unusually high volume of 43 million shares.

This constitutes a breakout and bearing in mind the length and narrow width of the base, a short-term target price of ₱2.30 looks likely. There should be good support at ₱1.80 as the current buying price of ₱1.84 has little downside risk.

In March, the PIAH group set in motion a series of events that will eventually make PIAH a very profitable and valuable company.

At the end of the day wholly owned Smart will be both the majority owner (with a 92-percent stake) and biggest creditor (69 percent of debt).

Smart decided to acquire its equity and debt holdings in PLD, in order to access the latter's huge base of deferred tax assets, thereby reducing its own tax burden.

Management said that the only way to accomplish this is by forming the common shareholding agreement between Smart and PLD.

The new split has not yet been disclosed, but from the current 80:80, I believe that it will be changed to 85:15 in favor of PLDT.

By shifting more revenue into PLD, Smart will substantially reduce the tax it has to pay for its own account. At the same time, the profits of PLD will surge.

For example, if we assume ₱15 billion in net cellular revenues for next year, the 33 percent difference between the old and new sharing schemes will result in ₱5.25 billion worth of additional revenue for PLD. Because it has huge deferred tax assets, nearly all of the ₱5.25 billion will flow into the company's bottom line.

This, even with an expected capex base of 11.77 billion shares, 2005 EPS should be at least 50 centavos. Minority shareholders should therefore take the impending dilution in its stride because the company's recovery will accelerate rapidly in the coming months and the stock should follow suit.

Meanwhile, how high PLD can go is anybody's guess. Assuming an understanding price-earnings multiple of 6, the shares should be worth at least ₱3.

Given its negative equity of over ₱22 billion, the company is unlikely to declare cash dividends before 2011.

On the other hand, the negative equity can easily be wiped out in four or five years, by which time, earnings per share should conservatively exceed ₱1.

Management has admitted that a 50:50 sharing is not fair to PLDT, because it does not affect the voice portion of all the company.

On the other hand, an 85:15 split would be unfair to Smart in the long run because it is the one that is making all the investments for the cellular infrastructure upon which PLD is dependent.

After the dividend tax assets are eventually depleted, I expect that the revenue sharing will be shifted again and that a compromise would be reached at around 60:40.

This will allow substantial profits to remain with PLD, and at the same time at low Smart to earn a good return on its investments.

Smart will always have the best interests of PLD in mind. As mobile penetration reached the lower income groups, Talk'N Text will be the brand of choice.

Already Hitachi subscribes have a favorable future, and so the fees will remain profitable in the long term.

PLD, therefore, represents a near-term recovery story as well as a play on the industry's substantial future growth.

It was noticeable that this week, most of the advertising was on Talk 'n Text instead of Smart.

What will happen to the 4 percent still in the hands of the public? It is quite possible that Smart will let it be. Although it slightly reduces the maximum advantage it can get from PIAH's tax losses of ₱10.9 billion.

It might decide to bid when PLD has paid off all its debt to Smart and rehoisted its old standing preferred shares.

The only problem is that by then, the shares will be worth much more, and eventual early dividends could be paid out.

This is an ideal stock for pension funds, insurance companies, bank trusts departments and anyone who does not need income but would rather hold a stock whose inherent value is steadily accumulating.

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This is an ideal stock for pension funds, insurance companies, bank trusts departments and anyone who does not need income but would rather hold a stock whose inherent value is steadily accumulating.

If I do not expect the original buyers to see their money back (investors they probably committed suicide years ago,) but I can envisage a price of ₱6, five years from now.

My 85/15 split is admittedly a guess, but Smart will announce the actual figure within the next month. If I am anywhere close, you bet will be doing their calculations and extrapolations, and foreign brokers might then get interested in the telecom sector in Chile for instance.

If this should happen, my short-term target could be comfortably exceeded. mebearbull@hotmail.com

Rollback in oil prices uncertain

By Abigail L. Ho

A POSSIBLE reprieve from high oil prices for local motorists now hangs in the balance.

Oil prices are on the climb again in the world market, which could pressure local oil firms into implementing a price rollback this month of as much as ₱1.40 a liter for gasoline and 20 centavos a liter for diesel.

As of July 9, the average for the benchmark Dubai crude was placed at $34.35 a barrel, up from the June average of $33.43 a barrel.

Shaun of Platts Singapore [illegible] found unleaded gasoline and diesel averaged $44.05 a barrel and $44.58 a barrel, respectively in the July 1-9 period.

The June average was pegged at $41.10 a barrel for unleaded gasoline and $41.84 a barrel for diesel.

These July 9 records as does an [illegible] already reflected climbing prices, as the week ending July 2 last Dubai crude averaging $33.27, a barrel and MOPS-based unleaded gasoline and diesel fell $40 a barrel and $43.66 a barrel, respectively.

Consumer and Oil Price Watch that Seal Concepcion said that a rollback was now unwelcome as threats of terrorist attacks on middle East oil installations as well as on the United States continue to drive up oil prices.

Also last week, the possibility that the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries [illegible] would increase its [illegible] by 500,000 barrels starting August pulled prices further up.

But key Opec members in Jakarta and Saudi Arabia gave assurances at the end of last week that the output hike would push through.

Pushing added pressure on prices is the coming winter months when most industrialized nations start stocking up on petroleum products for heating.

Concepcion said a cheaper price of less than a dollar would encourage [illegible] but price rollbacks, he said, were still possible at this point.

"We'll just have to monitor the prices and see whether or not the [illegible] will continue. If prices go down, we can have a rollback," he said.

He said the oil firms could implement partial rollbacks, depending on prices of petroleum products in the international market.

Smaller prices have risen six times this year by a total of ₱4.20-₱4.20 a liter.

Diesel prices, on the other hand, have gone up five times by a total of ₱3.00-₱3.15 per liter.

Meanwhile, he said the government's plan to [illegible] petroleum taxes may not likely to be implemented if world market prices would continue to go up.

"The government will not push through with that plan unless there's a downward [illegible] Energy Secretary Vincent Perez stressed," he said.

Ngayong Huwebes + alas-8 ng gabi + ABC

THE LAST TABOO
MAGKANO ANG SWELDO MO?
plus +
TANONG NG BAYAN*
Sino ang bagay sa DSWD, si Dinky o si Noli?
BYLINE INQUIRER
Sa dulo ng bala...
gaano ba kadali kumuha ng baril?
Hatid sa inyo ng ating kabalitaan ngayong linggo, Inquirer Lifestyle columnist
Cory Quirino
THIS WEEK'S EPISODE IS BROUGHT TO YOU BY:
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PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

FOOD for the brain
/C3

LIFESTYLE

What you should know about strength training

Part One

STRENGTH training is exercising using some type of resistance to build strong muscles. The resistance can come from dumbbells, barbells, machines, rubber bands and body weight.

Many people believe only men need to improve their strength. The truth is everyone, young or old, can benefit from

WELL AND GOOD

Jittes Anero

a stronger body.

There are strength training programs for all kinds of people. Although firm and shapely muscles are pleasant side effects of strong muscles, there are many surprising health benefits from lifting weights, the most common form of strength training.

Aesthetic benefits

Strength training gives you a tighter, leaner body because it necessitates a more

POPULAR new guards Shoprite's Chonie and Cristelle Tantoco

GUARDIANS. Christine Escobero and Nikki Prieto Tantoco

DAUGHTERS night out. Young ponds Alexa Martinez with her mom, good-looking dad Albert

MOTHER-DAUGHTER team. Rep. Miguel Zubiri's fiancee Audrey Tan with her mom, Lourdes Tan

PENINSULA'S beautiful first couple. Dashing David Batchelor and gorgeous Marylou Tiotuico Batchelor

MANILLE'S top socialites Hollie Abbass and Erin Cross

Watch-ing people for 100 years

THE HOTTEST ticket in town recently was the tres, exclusive soiree to celebrate the 100th anniversary of the fine Geneva watch.

With the premiere lifestyle house, Rustan's Department Store, Cartier hosted a tres, elegant, glitzy cocktail reception for Gianni Mariello's super fashionable set to introduce his own watch creation. The eye-catching Santos 100 and the stylish Santos Demoiselle.

Entertainment was provided by different performers, including Emma Aitchison of Australia's breathtaking aerial Angels, and her hot DJ Blended Elastic.

Cartier recreated the glamour, opulence and excitement of cosmopolitan Paris at the turn of the century and the beginning of aviation.

Top fashionistas models like Mari Haddefeld, Laurence de Stefano and Lidia Jakkola showed off the Maxim de Cartier watches, eliciting sighs from the chi-chi pack. I couldn't tell whether the gals were swooning over the watches or the hunks.

Christopher Bonnel like a flash flood to the absolute delight of the waitress subbing on mommy cooked finger foods assembly garbed by Emilio Bonn, natch!

The affair's highlight was the raffle of watches, the first Santos Demoiselle Cartier's brilliant marketing director for the PH first, Maxime Aligne, had sallied out five numbers without anyone claiming the prize.

When the sixth number was announced, screams and applause filled the room. The popular sun Southern passenger, Wanda Diaz, rushed up the stage breathless and unbelieving. She beamed in just 31 minutes before the raffle.

Oh well, I'll stick to my original, dream Cartier watch and my lap brunch, wine or pee, sorts, of baby!

At the party were Santos group of companies chairman Ambassador Esperanza S. Santos, with his son, Santos Commercial Corp. president Rico Santos; top architect and interior designer who was smiling proudly over the successful launch, Rustan's VP for marketing, mega mom Vida Estrella; Ayana Mercedes; philanthropic chairman Socorro Ayala Aseniar, Philippine Tatler's prime mover and shaker, business-plus lover Hazel Francisco; Rustan's VP for men and young adults, Jenny Tantoco, with lady love Victoria Loudon, bounce with the trounce, Josephine Rosas-Obregon, the cool popular Old, Anthony Lucero, with the hunk's top corset designer, workaholic Joy Wincenzo; Ayala Fairways; that trios with the 3 Js, charisma working young socialite Leah Puyat, super vivacious Lorraine Ordonez; popular couple, tycoon Louie and Shelbe Alkuino; lovely beautiful Marilou Pineda; dazzling Ruby Gail Balayut Pelcher, looking lush, socially chic in a basic black outfit; Mary Pevida, with her daughter Marilou Lorenzo, sultry beauty and concert queen Hope Hernandez, looking absolutely delicious.

Also there were brilliant beauty Rachel Ireton, in town from her studies at the Fletcher School of Law and Diplomacy in Massachusetts; talented brothers Rasmus and Oki to socialite; Lifestyle hosts top lady Suzi Bag; Sandee and Blake Tantoco; exclusive investors, good looking Jose Stawell and gorgeous Bianca Zobel; beautiful couple Rupert and Kitty Jacinto; the Linnaeus's lot, but pal Tina Tinio; architect Victor Goseng, with gorgeous sister Caroline Baker; Stella's beauty and superstar singer Tina Morales, watcher pal and banquet BC Stac Walker Tolo.

CARTIER'S big three. Tall, dashing Jason Scott-Lewis, PR manager, Competitor Carmen Hansen and managing director for the Far East, Maxime Elgue

HOTSHOTS. Rustan's Rico Santos and BPI's Gigi Montinola

VIP. Love Cartier. Fashion plate Dipshi Dhirwal, who made prince from Swiss and Indian culinary art princess Margarita Forés

DEDICATED workaholic, Rustan's brand manager for Cartier Julienne T. Manalapis

Maxime Aligne

WITHOUT BATTING AN EYELASH

Photos by Alvin Vun-Hagpes and Kimbark Blue

THE ARTIST, the sugar heiress and the interior designer. Martin Jacinto, Alexis Fortuny and Eva Monasterio

ON a rare night out. Antonina Gloria Angara and her daughter Ana

THE GANG of three. Ricky Toledo, Wyn Wyn Ong and Chito Pijuan

INSEPARABLE GALS. Sunrise Alcaraz, Gina Tantoco-Rivera, Margarita Delgado and Lizzie Zobel

Scene at Nuvo

Nuvo bar and lounge was definitely the place to see and be seen recently, paparazzi. Tall, gorgeous local cuties Winnie Antonio's brood, the well-heeled, Vicki Belo's, dynasty, reinvented's most particularly those of tall, handsome businessman Bernd Lopez, who was completely anonymous, paparazzi.

Seated at one table were our favorite glam gals of TV, sparkling eye-candies Vicky Belo, looking svelte as ever in spaghetti strap printed silk Buddha blouse; and adorable Cecile Bolton, all stunning, another gleaming year in an already dazzling life.

Not far behind was beautiful, popular socialite, my paparazzi, young beauties on entrepreneur Isabel Preysler and his fashionable sister, diva-wife Marie Reynoso, joining friends for a late nightcap to celebrate 31 years of wedded bliss, dahlings.

Also at Nuvo was, grand hostess, business whiz Beatriz Gimpaya, who gave a fantastic dinner for inspiring brilliant lawyer, Manuel "Boysie" Tordesillas, the new ambassador to the World Trade Organization in Geneva.

There were around 40 of us, mostly Ayalaan classmates and their gang, who had a blast till way past midnight. Manila's best-loved, popular photoshop Ed Fernandez, is already in Cebu as special assistant to Ambassador Manuel T., paparazzi.

And who was the good-looking businessman of businessman who came solo? Before he could but me eyeballs, a beautiful woman in a dress ate beside him and they created up in spats the dark at Nuvo. Mik, Ramon, super Tantoco, dahlings.

Cocktail

Mon for all reasons, the son of a kind Louie Cruz, gave a fantastic, superbly prepared dinner last Friday at the Boulevard Ilo of his cute, world traveler, vivacious Candy Cruz, for 30 dozen pals who echo like their voices sometimes.

It was so stunning they were asking Louie for a "re-re my hand" before they left.

A gorgeous society hulo out with some pals was approached by a real good-looking expat who asked right away after introducing himself, "Sorry, but are you married?"

Her answer: with a flirtatious smile, "No, but I'm very happily separated."

Go, girl! Go!

Hunks and a songbird

Still on the Nuvo event, tall handsome Christian Haggerty, was with his songbird, lovely brunette Cris Milsom. Their table, joined by 10 good-looking hunks, pals of Christian, who were on a boys' night out. Needless to say, Cris was the belle of Nuvo that night.

A super rich DOM was table, not one, but two ladies at Nuvo's outdoor café. This guy is so old but still classy, dahlings. I bet he can't even remember why. 50 bob, paparazzi?

STAR of the night. Rustan 1 Mfrs gold and steel

LOOKING great. Liliana Barzon-Cojuangco

GOOD. In Mom. Myrnylin Perez

HIP and beautiful. Wendy Payot-Herrera, DJ Montano and Ria Romero

ENDEARING! beauties. Raina Prokopiv, Tina Markinez-Ocampo and Audrey Packard-Diaz

NEWLY designated ambassador to Australia, Former Batangas governor Emily Bolante Lopez, and former representatives, now Ambassador Alberto Lopez

THEY have the smile. Bong Dee, Mia Berenson and Sharmila Mirasol

Brain health

"A mind body without a mind brain is meaningless."—Jean Carper, "Your Miracle Brain"

For decades, medical attention has focused on the heart and how to keep it healthy. But the new science asks—what about brain health?

Did you know that brain cells are considered cast more sensitive (than other cells) to diet? What you eat also determines how the brain will function.

Undoubtedly, the brain is priceless being the seat of consciousness and intelligence.

INSIDE OUT

Grey Quintos

Through studies, cupboards and cerebra, lifestyle factors, increased brain power is achieved and brain deterioration prevented. The new science is coming up with more fascinating revelations and showing how the human brain can be cared for throughout your lifetime.

Gispen says, "Without neurotransmitters, the lights in the brain would go out. They are the biochemical electrical signals from your brain. They are the essence of your memory, mood, intelligence and sensitivity."

He adds, "The type of neurotransmitters your neurons make and release and when and where they release them depends partly on what you eat."

Caring for the brain should become important thing to do rather than the brain is growing and changing at all times.

Nutritional neuroscience

Scientific evidence now to prove that the right foods have natural neuro chemicals that can enhance mental capabilities. The right diet can improve memory and reduce stress, help concentration and thinking, and possibly prevent brain aging.

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Unhealthy diet—Brain cells named neurons use many organic chemicals to function. The good news is that brain deterioration is preventable

GODIVA SKIN STATION OPENS
Top personalities in the skin and body care business, as well as store business personalities, graced the recent blessing and formal inauguration of Godiva Skin Station at the UG/L SM Fairview Annex, QC. Plastic surgeon Dr. Rene Valerio (second from left) and actress-singer Jessica Sanico (third from left) are flanked by Godiva owners Fred and Carbeth Reyes.

Badminton gear on sale

TODAY's Sports outlets all over the country are holding a badminton sale.

Discounts of up to 50 per cent and promos are being offered on the widest selection of badminton brands and equipment including rackets, shuttlecocks, shoes, apparel, bags and strings.

Badminton brands participating in the promo include RSL, Prince, GoDen, Dunlop, Hasaar, Fusen, Wave, Adidas, Wilson, Gosen, Mizuno and Advance.

Today's "Ultimate Badminton Sale" runs until July 31. Call 6424111 or visit www.sportsplus.com.

EXERCISE OF THE WEEK

Pilates kneeling side leg circles

THIS Pilates-inspired exercise strengthens the shoulder, trunk and hip muscles.

Equipment:
Exercise mat

Exercise technique:

1. Kneel on a mat with your legs together. Extend your right leg to the side and place your right hand behind your head.

2. Slowly lower yourself down and place your left hand on the mat.

3. Lift your right leg to hip level and make five circles forward, then five circles backward.

4. Slowly straighten up and repeat on the other side.

Performance tips:

1. Keep your torso steady as you make the circles.

2. Keep your elbow facing the ceiling to make sure that your spine is not bending forward or backward.

3. Breathe normally as you make the circles.

4. This is an advanced exercise. Ideally it by lying down on your side.

Repetitions:
Do five to 10 circles forward, then five to 10 circles backward.

What you should know about strength training

From page 12

compact and dense compared to flabby muscle.

Strength training is essential if weight control because the more muscle mass you have, the faster your metabolism. Muscle tissue is more metabolically active than fat tissue. In other words, it burns more calories.

The reason middle-aged people gain weight faster as they get older is muscle atrophy. Muscles unchallenged by strength training shrink with age. Smaller muscles mean less calories burned every day.

Strength training can make your body look more symmetrical. Although a woman cannot hope to increase muscle size as dramatically as a man's because she has very little testosterone (the male sex hormone), appropriate strength training techniques can put a little bulk where needed for a more symmetrical figure.

For example, a woman with narrow shoulders and big hips can emphasize the shoulders a little easier so the hips don't look as big. A woman with thin legs can make them a little fuller so the lower body matches the bigger upper body.

The secret is in the amount of weight you lift and how many times you lift it. To make a muscle bigger, choose a weight that you can lift six to eight times before your muscles get tired. For firmer muscles without an increase in size, choose a weight you can lift 15-20 times before you get fatigued. Twelve repetitions is recommended for people wanting stronger muscles with just a slight increase in bulk.

Strength training coupled with flexibility training (stretching exercises) can improve posture by making arm muscles are balanced. For example, rounded wounded shoulders can be improved by strengthening the muscles at the back of the shoulders and between the shoulder blades while stretching the muscles in the chest and the front of the shoulders. Bad posture does not only increase the risk of injury in the lower back, but also makes people look shorter and fatter.

Physiological benefits

These are health benefits are will not set right away and are not obvious to others.

Strength training can help prevent osteoporosis or decrease strong muscles equal strong bones. Maximum bone mass, or when a muscle contracts against resistance, the pulling force exerted makes the bones denser and stronger. Strength training also helps improve balance so unnecessary falls are prevented and athletic performance is enhanced.

Strength training can help people with arthritis because strong muscles are better able to absorb the stress around the affected joints.

Although the aerobic type (walking, cycling, dancing, jogging) is the most common exercise recommended for people with high blood pressure, properly and safely done strength training has been found to help normalize blood pressure. Strength training can reduce total cholesterol and LDL cholesterol (the bad kind) as well as improve the ratio of total cholesterol to HDL (the good kind).

Post-menopausal women tend to accumulate more fat in their abdomens than in their hips, buttocks and thighs because of changes in hormone levels. They end up having the same fat distribution pattern as a man—especially the storage of visceral fat. This kind of fat is not found under the skin (subcutaneous fat) but around the abdominal organs. It has been associated with a higher risk of heart disease.

Research has found that strength training can significantly reduce visceral or intra-abdominal fat in older women.

It has also been discovered that strength training can help keep insulin levels normal, reducing the risk of type 2 (adult onset) diabetes and heart disease.

Psychological benefits

Studies show that a strong body improves self-confidence and self-esteem. Aside from showing you look good, knowing you can take care of yourself physically is a great mental booster.

You cannot separate the body from the mind or vice-versa. Depression shows in the way you walk and the way you hold yourself. When you are feeling physically weak, you also feel emotionally and mentally down. Strengthening your body helps to strengthen your mind and emotions.

Next week: Principles of strength training

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Mandala Spa in Boracay will hold yoga retreats, July 17-19 with Louise Rawlins, Aug. 6-8 with senior Iyengar instructor Jeremiah Jeye, and Sept. 17-19 with Shi-Chang Yip. Call 886-2885-8168 or e-mail to fo@mandalaspa.com.

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